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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was conducted to explore student perceptions of service learning as well as the importance of service learning to community college students. Data were collected through interviews with 24 community college participants from Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College, both in southwest Virginia. Nonstandard interviews were conducted in phases, depending upon the availability of and convenience for the participants. Findings showed that students involved in service learning experienced many outcomes, ranging from hands-on experience, and social and academic benefits, especially in the area of accounting, civic responsibility, personal efficacy, civic mindedness and community building, developing a meaningful philosophy about life, appreciation for diversity, altruism, and student autonomy. Findings also showed that time, family, and job responsibilities seemed to be the reasons more students did not get involved. Students were also concerned about the lack of enthusiasm from instructors. They said there would be more student participation if lab time, such as biology or other science labs, were built into the service hours. Appended are the informed consent form, a letter of introduction, a demographic data sheet, a student interview guide, and an auditor's report. (Contains 120 references.) (Author/EMH)

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A Study of Service-Learning at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

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Keywords: Service Learning, Community College, Connectedness, Hands-On Experience, Reflective Opportunities, Group Awareness, Role Models, Diversity

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ABSTRACT

A Study of Service-Learning at Virginia Highlands Community College
and Mountain Empire Community College

by

Alice Hughes

The purpose of this study was to conduct a qualitative analysis of service learning. This analysis was performed to collect data on student perceptions of service learning and to understand the importance of service learning to community college students in their own words. Data were collected through interviews with 24 community college participants from Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College, both in Southwest Virginia. I used a nonstandard interview because it is less abrupt, remote, and arbitrary than the structured interview. I wanted to tap into the experiences of these students to learn what they thought, how they felt, and how service learning benefited or did not benefit them. Permission to conduct this study was granted by both College Presidents. Personal contact was made with school officials. Interviews were conducted in phases depending upon the availability and convenience of the participants.

Findings showed that students involved in service learning experience many outcomes. These ranged from hands-on experience, social benefits, academic benefits especially in the area of accounting, civic responsibility, personal efficacy, civic mindedness and community building, developing a meaningful philosophy on life, appreciation for diversity, altruism, and student autonomy. Findings did show that time and family or job responsibilities seemed to be the reason more students do not get involved. Students were concerned about the lack of enthusiasm from the instructors. They also said there would be more student participation if lab time, like a biology or science lab, were built into the service hours.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade colleges and universities have made greater efforts to involve students in community service, particularly service learning, a special form of community service designed to promote student learning and development. Service-learning advocates contend that it stimulates academic performance, increases students' understanding of the responsibilities of living in a democratic society, and encourages students to become involved in the social problems facing their communities (Gray, Ondaatje, & Zakatas, 1999). Millions of dollars have been awarded to higher education institutions and community organizations from 1995 to the present for the purpose of enhancing the links between community service and academic learning by developing service-learning programs as part of the regular college curriculum. The effects of such programs on the students have not been easy to measure; however, these students' unique educational experiences have certainly had an impact on their lives.

Service-learning, according to some, is the most recent manifestation of what is now almost a 100-year history of American educational reform that attempts to bring the school and community back together, to build or rebuild a citizenship ethic in young people, and to bring more active forms of learning to schools.

Senge (1990) said that learning never occurs through passive study alone but must be related to action. According to Senge the most successful corporation of the future will be something called a learning organization that has discovered how to tap into people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization.

King and Kitchener (1994) have written that traditional academic programs have not resulted in moving most college students to the levels necessary to cope with complex issues and information. A common observation was the lack of connectedness in higher education and the

related lack of application of what is learned. Lack of connectedness resulted in the compartmentalization of knowledge by discipline, preventing students from experiencing the relationships among various modes of knowledge; and subject matter was walled off behind disciplinary borders, thus not applied in any integrated way to academic study or to social issues. Students also experienced a lack of connection between classroom learning and their personal lives and between institutions, noting barriers to connection between secondary and post-secondary education, between college study and the workplace, and between campus and community.

Service-learning advocates are generally careful not to claim the movement as a panacea for what ails American schools. Outright opposition to the idea of community service as a component of education is rare. Proposals to require service as a condition of high school or college education are very controversial. Some have questioned the costs and the increased administrative burdens for staff and teachers. One Maryland school board vice president was quoted as characterizing student service as "fluffy, feel-good stuff" in that scientific research does not say service learning has made a difference in a student's education (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993, p. 411).

According to Eyler and Giles (1999), service programs have flourished but have not become well connected to the academic core of most institutions that house them. Perhaps there have been no systematic efforts to establish conditions under which service learning is most effective. Because most of the assessment of academic outcomes has been limited to course grades or student self-reports, the research that has focused on academic benefits of service learning has had mixed results. Although students do not learn less by these measures in service-learning classrooms, it is not clear that they learn more.

From December 1998 through March 1999 the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Higher Education Research Institute Service-Learning Clearinghouse Project, a partner

organization of the Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, conducted an electronic survey of grantees and sub-grantees of the Corporation for National Service (CNS) to determine the needs of service-learning practitioners in colleges and universities nationwide. The survey gathered information about training, technical assistance, research, and program needs of the field. The Internet survey yielded approximately 70 responses. While the majority of respondents were directors of service-learning programs at their colleges or universities, some were both service-learning program directors and faculty members of an academic department. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which each of nine general categories represented "areas of need" with regard to their service-learning program. Seventy % of the respondents indicated a high need with regard to increased service-learning research and evaluation. This study will address the need for additional research data on service learning by providing data from the students' perceptions.

Statement of the Problem

This research will look at student perceptions of service-learning experiences at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College.

The purpose of this study was to discover students' perceptions of the effects of service learning on college undergraduates and to increase our understanding of how service learning connects students-institutions-communities.

Significance of the Study

Community colleges have always had as goals providing access and opportunity to students. Educators agree that community colleges are unique in American higher education and are effective when widely diverse students come into the institution, find a purpose, declare a goal, and move

through the institution to successfully achieve that goal. Chickering and Gamson (1987) said that there were major experiences central to student development:

1. Engaging students in making choices;
2. Interaction with diverse individuals and ideas;
3. Involvement in direct and varied experiences;
4. Freedom in solving complex intellectual and social problems without demanding an authority's viewpoint;
5. Receiving feedback;
6. Making objective self-assessments.

Community colleges that continually question what they do, with whom they do it, and how each activity brings a student closer to success increase the chances that their institutions will make a difference to the millions of students searching for their share of the American dream (Helfgot & Culp, 1995).

Covey (1990) says effective people begin with an end in mind. For the community college effective is student success. What can we learn from student involvement in service learning that will empower undergraduates in the community college system to be more successful? If higher education helps students prepare for their life's work, can service learning prepare them as citizens within a democratic society? Pertinent research in service learning may lead to valuable answers in the future. By looking at the unique perceptions of students at two community colleges, answers may be revealed as to the importance of student involvement in service learning. How do community college students perceive service learning? Does service learning provide the connecting link for student-college-community?

Limitations and Delimitations

This research is delimited to Virginia Highlands Community College, Abingdon, Virginia and Mountain Empire Community College, Big Stone Gap, Virginia. The results should only be considered within the contexts of these two schools. The population consisted of community college students who were enrolled at VHCC or MECC, either full or part-time, and who were participants in a service-learning activity. Generalizations regarding the findings of this study may not be applicable or appropriate to other institutions or populations.

Use of the format of the nonstandard interview limited the study in terms of subsequent opportunity for interactive exchange. There was no set time limit for the interview. The results of this study were limited to cultivating an understanding about how students perceive a situation (Krueger, 1988). An attempt was made by the researcher to maintain objectivity and use sound judgment at all times in collecting any information for the study, including checks and balances to the study in terms of audits, transcription of tapes, and debriefing.

Definitions

For purposes of clarification and mutual understanding, key terms and words as applied and used in this research study, are as follows:

1. Cognitive development: How students think, the structural ways in which they reason, and the process they use for thinking.
2. Learning organization: Organizations that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels in an organization.
3. Naturalistic inquiry: Studying situations as they unfold naturally, non-manipulative, unobtrusive, and non-controlling; openness to whatever emerges with a lack of predetermined constraints on outcomes (Patton, 1990). A discovery oriented approach that

minimizes investigator manipulation of the study setting and places no prior constraints on what the outcomes of the research will be (Guba, 1978).

4. Nonstandard interview: A sharply focused, rapid, highly intensive process that seeks to diminish the indeterminacy and redundancy that attends more unstructured research processes. The nonstandard interview calls for the use of an open-ended questionnaire, so the investigator can maximize the value of the time spent with the respondent. The nonstandard interview is designed to give the investigator a highly efficient, productive, streamlined instrument of inquiry (McCracken, 1990).
5. Self-efficacy: A person's belief that he or she can accomplish a task.
6. Service learning: A form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities designed to promote student learning and development (Sigmon, 1994).

Although there is no one definition of service learning (Luce et al., 1988), the four criteria used by the Commission on National and Community Service of 1990 have become widely accepted. A service-learning program provides educational experiences:

1. In which students learn through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with school and community.
2. That are integrated into the students' academic curriculum or that provide structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what he or she did and saw during the actual service activity.
3. That provide students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities.

4. That enhance what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community, and that help to foster the development of a sense of caring for others (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Kraft & Krug, 1994).

Summary

Educators and educational researchers are currently exploring and implementing programs in an attempt to better prepare young people for life as independent thinkers, productive citizens, and future leaders. Palmer (1987) said that we bring ourselves to the teaching process, just as our students bring themselves to the learning process; and that one of the difficult truths about teaching is that it "will never take unless it connects with the inward, living core of our students' lives"(p.20). Trends in undergraduate education in the United States suggest some movement in perceptions of the faculty member's role in the classroom away from that of the provider of instruction to that of the facilitator of student learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995). In this concept of effective teaching, students with the help and guidance of the faculty, discover and learn for themselves, becoming members of learning communities as they make discoveries and solve problems. This study will look at student perceptions of their service learning experiences to discern whether or not the service learning experience stimulated their academic performance, increased student's understanding of their responsibility living in a democratic society, and, if it encouraged students to become involved in social problems facing their communities.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several bodies of literature and conceptual resources have given shape to this study. These include many aspects of service learning, including the history, principles of, and standards for service-learning programs, as well as student development and student outcomes. These have served as a starting point and a guide for the study.

Definition for Service Learning

In 1969 the Office of Economic Opportunity established the National Student Volunteer Program, which shortly became the National Center for Service Learning. Two years later, this program, along with VISTA and the Peace Corps, combined to form the federal agency ACTION. ACTION published a magazine, Synergist; developed a network; and distributed seed money. Many campus-based service program were started during this period. Many have disappeared. Regional and consortium programs emerged in during the 1960s and 1970s, such as the Southern Regional Education Board's resource development internships, the Philadelphia Urban Semester, Chicago Urban Semester, and the Twin Cities Metropolitan Urban Studies Term and City Arts. The Corporation for National Service (CNS) did not last long but in 1978 the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education (NSIEE). As of 1994 the National Society for Experiential Education, NSEE, was formed by fusing these groups for field experience education and service internships (cited in Jacoby, 1996). The Education Commission of the States began Campus Compact, an organization of college and university presidents who have pledged to encourage and

support academically based community service at their institutions and that has over five hundred members (Jacoby and Associates, 1996).

According to Kendall (1990), service learning is a philosophy of human growth and purpose, a social vision, and an approach to community. Stanton (1990) said it is the element of reciprocity that elevates it to the level of philosophy of expressing values that is linked to service to others, community development and empowerment, and reciprocal learning, all of which determines the purpose, nature, and process of social and educational exchange between learners and the people they serve. Service learning is a philosophy of reciprocity, which implies a concerted effort to move from charity to justice, from service to the elimination of need (Jacoby and Associates, 1996).

Stanton, of the Haas Center for Public Service at Stanford University (cited in Luce et al., 1988) adds that service learning is a form of experiential education that emphasizes for students the accomplishment of tasks that meet human needs in combination with conscious educational growth.

The research of Dewey, Tyler, and Taba said that students who actually do things, who engage in activities related to, remember what they have learned much longer than students who do not. For Dewey (1933), learning had to do with the fact that the mind is social, and that learning is a by-product of social activities. For Tyler (1949), the point was simply that learning occurs through the active behavior of the student in that it is what the student learns, not what the teacher does. Those principles have been borne out by study after study, and in the work of such widely respected and diverse educators as Jean Piaget, James Coleman, and David Kolb.

Kinsley (1994), Executive Director of Community Service Learning Center, said that service learning is grounded in both common sense and in sound education theory and goes back to Aristotle. Kinsley gave her definition of service learning as an educational process that involves

students in service experiences with two firm anchors: the service experience must be directly related to academic subject matter and must make positive contributions to individuals and community institutions.

Educational reform and initiatives for public service have aided the popularity of service learning. Education reform visualized an educational process that would be relevant, active, experiential, and involving (Chickering & Associates, 1981). The public service initiatives saw the purpose of education as the development of responsible citizens who would reinvigorate the public service mission of higher education, promote student volunteerism, connect students with social problems, and build caring habits. Kohlmoos (1994) said that service learning is something greater than a program with a beginning and an end but rather an integral part of reform in that it seeks to build a lasting connection between the constantly changing needs of the community and education.

History of Service Learning

John Dewey's ideas about learning included actions directed toward the welfare of others and is often cited as a foundation for service learning. According to Dewey something is understood only when it can be reproduced on demand. He said that by directing students toward demonstrating concern for other people increased learning would take place (cited in Conrad & Hedin, 1991).

De Tocqueville, as translated by H. Reeve (1963), observed that American democracy, for all its strength, tended to foster individualism because of its emphasis on personal freedom. He concluded that individualism revolves around private life with sole concern for self, family, a small circle of friends, and material wealth.

Kinsley (1994) said that young people need to be raised with the ideal that service to others and to their community is part of what it means to be a grown up, to live in a free society, and to be a human being.

William Kilpatrick is said to be the originator of school-based community service. Kilpatrick introduced the project method of learning near the end of World War I and argued that learning should take place outside of the school to meet community concerns and needs (cited in Conrad & Hedin, 1991). The Progressives kept his method alive through the 1930s based on their belief that schools should strive to imbue students with ethical values and the skills to create social reform (Conrad & Hedin).

The political unrest of the 1960s brought numerous reports in the 1970s, identified by Conrad and Hedin (1991), that supported the idea of students being involved in service activities: "America's Youth in the Mid-Seventies (1972), "Youth: Transition to Adulthood" 1974, and "New Roles of Youth: In the School and the Community" (1974). In 1975 a curriculum was outlined for using community service in "Education for Citizen Action" (Conrad & Hedin).

Experiential education was a precursor to the service-learning movement. This approach contended that learning occurs as students find more satisfying and complex ways to understand and act on their world (Conrad & Hedin, 1991). In experiential education, the student performs first, then determines the effects, understands the general principles involved, and applies the information to new circumstances. Freire , one of the better-known leaders of experiential education, said the development of political consciousness was central to instructing adults in literacy. Education was not just about learning to read, but learning to question the conditions that left many without access to education, economic opportunity, or political power (cited in Eyler & Giles, 1999). Freire said, "If I do not love the world—if I do not love life—if I do not love man—I

cannot enter into dialogue. Dialogue, when there is nothing in common, seems unlikely if I do not care about my neighbor" (Translated by M.B. Ramos, 1963, p.78). Students' involvement in service learning could be seen as an act of bridging a culture grounded in individualism. Rhoads (1997) said service-learning experiences foster an ethic of care among students and teachers in a way that contributes to community building where people care about others, about the idea of community, and see themselves connected to one another.

Learning through doing is the generally accepted model for advocates of experiential education programs, with the link being an integration of active involvement with critical reflection. Such programs become learner-centered with the instructor acting as a guide or as a mentor and never dominating the learning experience. Proponents of experiential education have argued that psychological growth is more likely to be achieved through their approach to learning (Stanton, 1990). They said that placing students in settings with practical problems is an effective way of promoting personal development, and that psychological growth requires challenge, conflict, support, and experience. The emphasis for experiential learning is on the process of learning rather than the behavioral outcomes.

Kendall (1990) also related service learning to experiential education, but said experiential learning was more generic and did not have the emphasis on community and public service as service learning.

Rhoads (1997) said the college years are key times for the development of a sense of self. because so many decisions about one's future and past come together and much thought and learning are given to identity matters. Higher education practitioners have been concerned about developing students as whole persons. Dewey, (cited in Rhoads, 1997), spoke to this when he

argued that schools have a key role in the development of students as citizens capable of making informed choices and actively participating in community, regional, and national governance.

Boyer's (1994) ideas for the higher education institution of the future included field projects, classrooms, and laboratories that included clinics, youth centers, schools, and government offices, all relating ideas to real life. Boyer (1996) argued that academic programs and service must be combined. While Boyer may have never used the term service learning, what he called the scholarship of engagement seemed to mean the same.

The value of service experiences carried into the 1980s. Goodlad (1984) suggested community service as a way to improve education. Wigginton (1985) described student-designed service projects in his work *Foxfire* in *Sometimes a Shining Moment*. Boyer (1983) recommended 120 hours of community service for graduation in his book, *High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America*. While much of the initiative for school-based service has come from policy makers and politicians, educational reports and reform proposals continue to include service as a part of the school experience (Conrad & Hedin, 1991). Using this as a tool for teaching and learning goes back to the educational philosophy of Dewey and others who have suggested the possibility of stimulating academic and social development through actions directed toward the welfare of others.

By the 1980s several curriculum theorists were advocating the need for more citizenship education. Giroux (1988) contended that social education lacked a clear account of the concept of citizenship because of the little importance placed on it. The New York Times reported in 1990 that, for the first time since World War II, young people showed less interest in public affairs than their elders (cited in Boyte, 1991). The Charles F. Kettering Foundation Director said citizenship today required active involvement. Concern for the younger generation is apparent. Since 1960

voter participation has declined 20%, with the youngest voters least likely to turn out on Election Day, causing concern that our younger generation will be less likely to engage in other aspects of civic life. In a survey of college freshmen conducted by the American Council on Education, the attitudes of young people have changed over the years. Between 1970 and 1987, the percentage of college freshmen who chose financial well being as their most important goal, increased from 29% to 75%, while a meaningful philosophy of life, chosen by 83% in 1967, declined to 39% in 1987 (cited in Conrad & Hedin, 1991).

Efforts to Promote Service-Learning

In recent years, numerous national and state organizations were established to promote service programs. The National Service-Learning Initiative is a collaborative effort of five organizations, including the National Youth Leadership Council in Minnesota, Project Service Leadership in Washington state, the National Indian Youth Leadership Council in New Mexico, the Michigan Partnership for New Education, and the Pennsylvania Institute for Environmental and Community Service-Learning, to offer training, curricula, technical assistance, research, and public policy consultation. Several other organizations have been established at the national, state, and local levels to support service learning (Cairn & Kielsmeier, 1991).

Through the Peace Corps and VISTA, John Kennedy challenged Americans to ask what they could do for their country. The Americorp Programs, established by President George Bush's nonpartisan Commission on National and Community Service and ACTION, as well as the Points of Light Foundation, recognize community service activities and provide college tuition in return for service that addresses education, human and environmental needs, and public safety. President Bush signed the National and Community Service Act of 1990, which established the funding for today's programs encouraging America's youth to engage in community service. President Clinton

is credited with much of the recent resurgence of interest in national service through the National and Community Service Trust Act, signed into law on September 21, 1993. The Act is designed to engage Americans in addressing the critical problems facing our country through meaningful community service. Learn and Serve America National Service Programs include the Higher Education Program, K-12 Program, School-Based Programs, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), National Senior Service Corps, Foster Grandparent Program, Senior Companion Program, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) (cited in Jacoby, 1996).

Principles of Service Learning

The Wingspread Conference (1989), sponsored by the Johnson Foundation, other national organizations, and representatives of many different types of schools, colleges, and programs, identified and agreed upon 10 principles for service learning. These principles could be used with any application of service learning and represented a global focus for the concept. The 10 principles are:

1. Engage people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
2. Provide structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.
3. Articulate clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.
4. Allow for those with needs to define those needs. .
5. Clarify the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.
6. Match service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.
7. Expect genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment.

8. Include training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet the service-learning goals.
9. Ensure that the time commitment for service learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved.
10. Committed to program participation by and with diverse populations. (Johnson Foundation, 1989, pp 2-3).

Covey (1990) said that focusing on principles empowers everyone to act without constant monitoring, evaluating, correcting, or controlling, and that once these become habits, they empower people to create a wide variety of practices to deal with different situations (p. 98).

Sigmon (1979) drafted three principles that underlie subsequent sets of service-learning principles. According to Sigmon, those being served control the services provided, become better able to serve and be served by their own actions, and those who serve are the learners and have significant control over that which is learned (p.10).

Fifteen states and more than 475 institutions have become members of the Partnership for Service Learning, a consortium of colleges, universities, and non-profit organizations that offer students intensive opportunities for learning through service (Gamson, 1997). Gamson further indicated that service learning focuses upon learning through experience integrated through service.

Kahne and Westheimer (1996) have written that educators and legislators maintain that service learning can improve the community and invigorate the classroom, providing rich educational experiences for students at all levels of schooling.

Tyler (1949) in his book, *Basic Principles of Curriculum*, outlined the importance of incorporating meaningful opportunities into the curriculum. Tyler said that there should be opportunities for students to enter, actively and wholeheartedly, into the things that interest them.

Service-learning experiences help to validate Tyler's theory. Recognizing that students are active participants—not passive recipients—in the learning process and in their making of meaning, that students approach this process from multiple frameworks, and that students' academic and cognitive development are shaped by their out-of-class experiences as well as their formal academic experiences, all make the educational process's connection to students' experience a central component of learning (Magolda, 1992). Assessing knowledge gains will no longer be sufficient; outcomes in critical thinking, cultural understanding, empathy, citizenship, and social responsibility will all be important (Astin, 1996). Students' potential for independent learning after college is another intended outcome of the new approaches to teaching and learning and a worthy object for assessment (Wingspread Group, 1993). Assessment must acknowledge the impact of environment and climate on student learning (Astin). The fact that about 85 % of students' waking hours are spent outside the classroom (Kuh et al., 1991), and that an increasing number of students are enrolled part-time, clearly suggest the need to maximize the opportunities colleges and universities have for enhancing students' learning. Service learning, internships, community service, and employment offer important opportunities to link students' out-of-class lives and experiences with what they are studying and learning in more formal instructional settings. Bringle and Hatcher (1996) said that service-learning possibilities could be credit-bearing experiential education opportunities where students participate in an organized service activity that meets community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility, ultimately enhancing a global learning potential.

El-Khawas (1996) reported that enrollment in graduate and professional degree programs was growing as was enrollment in certificate programs of less than two years. Diverse educational

goals, as well as varying life and economic circumstances, produce different attendance patterns. Part-time enrollments continue to grow, and, while institutions vary in the balance of part-time and full-time enrollment, part-time students make up approximately 40 % of the undergraduate enrollment. Student transfers among institutions are also increasingly prevalent. Higher education tends to be a part of students' lives, but in many cases college attendance is not the central or defining activity of their lives. For many students, college must compete with employment and family obligations. Adults' abilities to manage their own work, nurture their own families, and contribute to their communities hinge on the complexity of their thinking, feeling, and relating to others (Kegan, 1994).

School-Based and Community-Based Service-Learning Standards

According to the Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform (ASLER) (1993), standards for service learning have been designed to be broad reaching in their scope, yet concrete enough to be translated into action as a measure of success in the use of service learning.

1. Effective service-learning efforts strengthen service and academic learning.
2. Model service learning provides concrete opportunities for youth to learn new skills, to think critically, and to test new roles in an environment that encourages risk-taking and rewards competence.
3. Preparation and reflection are essential elements in service learning.
4. Youths' efforts are recognized by those served, including their peers, the school, and the community.
5. Youth are involved in the planning.
6. The service students perform makes a meaningful contribution to the community.
7. Effective service learning integrates systematic formative and summative evaluation.

8. Service learning connects the school or sponsoring organization and its community in new and positive ways.
9. Service learning is understood and supported as an integral element in the life of a school or sponsoring organization and its community.
10. Skilled adult guidance and supervision are essential to the success of service learning.
11. Pre-service training, orientation, and staff development that include the philosophy and methodology of service learning best ensure that program quality and continuity are maintained.

Structure of Service-Learning Programs

Student service-learning programs vary throughout the nation. Duckenfield and Swanson (1992) identified four models for implementing service programs: as a voluntary extracurricular activity within a school club; as a curricular unit within a course; as a separate mandatory or elective service course; or as school-wide integration into several courses, wherein service is a major educational outcome for the total academic program. The National Crime Prevention Council saw mandatory programs as a way to motivate students who normally do not volunteer; therefore, contributing even more to the community and expanding the school's educational mission.

The literature supports service learning as one of the approaches to reforming schools. Conrad and Hedin (1991) viewed service as meeting many of the basic objectives of schools: students' personal, social, and intellectual development and the preparation for effective citizenship in society. Service learning viewed from this perspective is an effective methodology for learning.

Academic learning is often assessed through test performance or course grades, but understanding is more than the ability to recall information when prompted by a test; understanding is the ability to call it up when it is relevant to a new situation and use it in that situation. Material

that is understood has meaning for learners and helps them make sense of the world. Learning in context and appreciating what the learner brings to the situation are fundamental experiential education. Eyler and Giles (1999) said it is attention to these two elements that helps the student master content and skills, and makes it possible to use the information effectively. They contend that the purpose of learning is to use what is learned. In order to test adequately for understanding, educators must see how students identify and describe complex problems as well as how they use skills and knowledge in offering tentative solutions to the problems.

Three components that have been established for student service-learning are: preparation, action, and reflection. The learning activities that take place prior to a student's volunteer work should include analyzing the problem, selecting and planning the project, and the necessary training to complete the project. Students can engage in different types of service: direct service, where students directly work with others; indirect service, when students meet a community need through fund-raising, collections, and clean-ups; or advocacy, where students lobby for a particular purpose or program. Reflections can include reading, writing, discussion, and projects (Maryland Student Service Alliance, as cited in Duckenfield & Swanson, 1992).

Kendall (1990) cited three lessons learned from service-learning programs in the 1960s and 1970s that affect program structure: programs must be integrated into the mission and goals of the school; a balance must be maintained between the needs of the servers and those being served; the service activity alone does not guarantee that students will learn. The preparation, monitoring, and debriefing are essential if students are to understand and apply what is learned from service experiences.

While the literature acknowledged the need for appropriate curricula for service learning (Kendall, 1990), the emphasis on reflection as the key ingredient to a successful program was

overwhelming. Reflection enables students to critically think about their service experiences by providing a structured opportunity for students to learn about their experiences (Duckenfield & Swanson, 1992). Through discussions with others and individual reflection, students can better develop a sense of social responsibility, advocacy, and active citizenship (Kendall) examine the service experience in relation to changes in attitudes, skills, and knowledge (Shumer & Cady, 1997) and apply theory to the practical experience of work. Without reflection, students are unaffected by the experience and have personal ignorance and biases reinforced (Duckenfield & Swanson). Reflection provides opportunities for students to develop competencies in problem solving, negotiation, consensus building, and public speaking skills necessary for social action and political participation (Rutter & Newmann, 1989). Reflection allows students to examine the complex dynamics of power, race, and class that are created when students go into areas outside their own environment (Boyte, 1991) consider interests for future learning, and arrive at some understanding about oneself and one's relationship to the world (Conrad & Hedin, 1991).

Kendall (1990) emphasized the need for a coordinator, faculty and administrative support, and integration into the classroom. A study completed in 1989 by the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education, as well as one by Stanford University, shows that teachers must assist students to assess what they are learning, make connections to prior experiences, and apply it to future action (Shumer, 1993). Parsons (1996) said that teachers have to work at making the positive connection between civic service and the study of civics in that they must fuse book learning with practical experiences.

The role of the community is important to the success of the service-learning experience. Rutter and Newmann (1989) emphasized that students should only be placed in the community when the service performed responds to a critical social need or contributes to the general welfare.

By working together, school and community create a more positive image of education (Conrad & Hedin, 1991).

Outcomes for Service Learning

Several recent studies have demonstrated the positive effects of service on students (Astin, 1996; Astin, Sax, & Avalos, 1999; Batchelder & Root, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Myers-Lipton, 1996; Sax, Astin, & Astin, 1996; Serow, Ciechalski, & Daye, 1990; Winniford, Carpenter, & Grider, 1995). Their findings show that student participation in service learning or volunteer work is positively associated with persistence in college, interest in graduate study, the development of leadership skills, and commitment to racial understanding. Additional studies across academic disciplines have found that integrated community service leads to higher grades, (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993) greater knowledge of subject matter, (Conrad & Hedin, 1982) greater ability to apply course concepts to new situations, (Kendrick, 1996) and strengthened critical thinking skills (Sax, Astin, & Astin, 1996). Students also report that service experience reinforces the course material and allows them to apply principles and concepts to actual situations that they encounter in the community (Wechsler & Fogel, 1995). Astin , Sax & Avalos found that community service was positively associated with student assessments of the relevance of their coursework to everyday life.

Proponents of service learning identify the development of citizenship most frequently as a benefit of service learning. Morse viewed student service learning as a methodology to develop the skills necessary to prepare students for citizenship. Service-learning experiences help students in defining their own concepts of citizenship, being informed about community needs and issues, voting, and procedures to petition. Civic responsibility requires attitude, personal efficacy,

acceptance of new ideas, diversity and opposing opinions as well as being able to act thoughtfully and prudently on critical public issues (Morse, 1992).

Students can also learn such skills as problem solving, critical thinking, synthesizing information, observation, decision-making, and critical reflection (Duckenfield & Swanson, 1992; Kendall, 1990; Nathan & Kielsmeier, 1991). Students may also learn skills in social interaction, communication, cooperation, organization, and time management (Duckenfield & Swanson; Kendall; Nathan & Kielsmeier). Self-confidence, a sense of identity, responsibility for oneself, and self-respect come with service-learning experiences (Duckenfield & Swanson). Students may formulate a value system, especially a sense of caring (Duckenfield & Swanson). Other outcomes include working with people of diverse backgrounds (Duckenfield & Swanson; Kendall), motivating students to improve in content areas (Duckenfield & Swanson; Hedin & Conrad; Kendall), working with people of all ages and backgrounds (Duckenfield & Swanson), easing the transition into adult roles (Duckenfield & Swanson), and increasing knowledge in general.

Some of the negative outcomes found in the literature regarded the quality of the programs themselves and the potential for students to have poor service experiences. Boyte (1991) wrote that poor programs without proper reflection would not accomplish the goals for helping students become better citizens.

Studies of Service-Learning Effectiveness

Studies have evaluated the impact on the community and those served (Kraft & Krug, 1994), students' psychological development (Kraft & Krug), sense of civic responsibility (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Giles & Eyler, 1994), commitment to continued community service (Hedin, 1989), or personal attributes such as self-esteem (Conrad & Hedin, 1982; Hedin). Studies have found that

students value their participation in service-learning experiences, are better able to integrate theory with practice, and demonstrate increased knowledge in areas related to their service experiences (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Markus et al., 1993).

Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates (1991) reported that involvement in social and academic life outside of the classroom, interactions with peers whose values match those of the institution, and how "connected" the students feel to the campus all support students' development in college. Involvement in the campus environment and out-of-class experiences is correlated with both cognitive and affective growth (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991; Schroeder & Hurst, 1996; Terenzini et al., 1996).

According to a study done by Zimmerman-Oster, and Burkhardt (1999), leadership program directors agreed that the goals of leadership education and training should include the development of skills, values, and cognitive understanding all of which are consistent with the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Student Learning Imperative that includes the assumption that learning, personal development, and student development are inextricably intertwined and inseparable and that the hallmarks of a college-educated person include cognitive skills, practical competence, and the ability to apply knowledge, an understanding and appreciation for human differences, and a coherent sense of self within a societal context (ACPA, 1994). Examples of leadership activities on many campuses included student participation in volunteer or community service, tutoring or peer mentoring, occupying an elected student leadership role, attending alternative spring breaks, or attending leadership development workshops (Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 1999).

Collaboration, Reciprocity, and Diversity

Service learning involves working in a creative tension marked by collaboration, reciprocity, and diversity generated within the context of the interrelationships among three domains or partners in service learning: the academy, the students, and the community. Each of these domains comes to the service-learning partnership with particular experiences, expectations, and attitudes. Mintz & Hesser (1996) have said the relationship among the three domains plus collaboration, reciprocity, and diversity as being ever changing and unique in that it gives the entire enterprise its life and energy (cited in Jacoby and Associates, 1996).

Collaboration occurs when two or more parties work together toward a common goal, share responsibility, authority, and accountability for achieving desired results. The purpose of collaboration is to create a shared vision and joint strategies to address concerns that go beyond the purview of the academy, the students and the community. Balancing interests, concerns, and expectations with skills, knowledge, and assets to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes demands that levels of control be distributed equally to ensure that power is not abused and that there is a common belief that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Mintz & Hesser, 1996). Genuine collaboration challenges the partners to develop a trusting environment, secure a common goal or purpose, and share responsibility and authority and lays the groundwork for trust and community building (cited in Jacoby and Associates, 1996).

Reciprocity suggests that every individual, organization, and entity involved in service-learning functions as both a teacher and a learner (Jacoby and Associates, 1996). Participants become colleagues. At the center of every set of core principles (Porter-Honnet and Poulsen, 1989; Sigmon, 1979, 1994) is a call for reciprocity among all involved in service learning. Reciprocity

suggests that as students learn from faculty, the community, and one another, faculty should also learn from the students, the community, and one another. This expansion of the community of learners and servers substantially enriches the outcomes (Mintz & Hesser, 1996).

Service learning involves socioeconomic status, ages, geographic affinities, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities, as well as racial, ethnic, and gender differences. Such diversity offers all the partners in service learning the opportunity to grow as caring, thoughtful citizens of a very diverse world. According to Mintz and Hesser (1996), the goal of building communities is to stop seeing communities and one another in terms of deficiencies and needs but rather to stress the capacities and assets of all involved in the service-learning enterprise. The synergy that develops through the shifts in levels of collaboration, reciprocity, and diversity in service learning creates a tension that can be positive and growth producing.

Factors Affecting the Service-Learning Experience

Literature indicates that many students in fact learn cognitive skills more effectively when the subject is taught in the context of real-world problems connected to career options. Chickering & Associates (1981) indicated a social reconsideration to higher educational practices. Pressures for technical and professional training run head on into social problems that need a more knowledgeable, sophisticated and complex citizenry.

Theories about how students learn and develop provide information about both the nature of college students who are participating in service learning and about the learning and developmental outcomes that can be expected from their participation. Development is the redefining of the self in more complex and more distinct ways, yet at the same time putting all the parts together in an integrated fashion (McEwen, 1996). Knefelkamp, Wydick and Parker (1974) said a delicate balance of challenge and support must exist for development to occur: Development is promoted

by offering the challenges to the individual that require new responses while simultaneously offering sufficient support to the student to confront the challenge (cited in Jacoby and Associates, 1996).

The three models of cognitive development pertinent to service learning are Perry's scheme of intellectual and ethical development; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's women's ways of knowing; and Magolda's gender-related patterns in students' intellectual development (cited in McEwen, 1996, p.57).

Perry's scheme comprises nine positions arranged in four groupings: dualism (positions 1 and 2) in which the student looks to authorities for right answers; multiplicity (positions 3 and 4) in which the student focuses on the process to acquire knowledge and everyone has a right to an opinion; contextual relativism (position 5 and 6) in which the student sees that knowledge can exist within a variety of contexts and that they need to make commitments; and commitment in relativism (positions 7, 8, and 9) in which the student commits to self by way of career or lifestyle and experiences implications of ongoing commitments (cited in McEwen,1996). According to Perry, learning is an ego-threatening task and affective components of learning are important. He said that students' thinking should be used only to provide clues about the cognitive structures they are using. Perry believed that true development in an individual occurs between positions and represent only the moments of development; and that the losses, the grieving, and the costs of growth are the educator's responsibility to honor these (McEwen). This shows how students participating in essentially the same activities engage in and yet understand them in different ways.

Belenky and colleagues. drew on extensive interviews with 135 women to propose five qualitatively different ways of knowing used by the women in their sample: silence, received knowledge, subjective knowledge, procedural knowledge, and constructed knowledge. It is from

these ways of knowing, the researchers suggest, that women view reality and draw conclusions about truth, knowledge, and authority (cited in McEwen, 1996). The two patterns of separate and connected knowing are relevant to service learning. According to Belenky et al., separate knowing means coming to know through doubting, through questioning, and through the knower separating the self from that to be known, while connected knowing is coming to know through believing, through the knower connecting with, having empathy with, the subject matter. Belenky said both kinds of knowing need to be developed, and connected knowing is needed for constructed knowledge, the fifth way of knowing (McEwen). The structured reflection of a service-learning experience helps students acquire, or affirm for them, an empathic way of knowing, and thus develop as connected knowers (Belenky). Male students are more likely to question more strongly their involvement in service-learning experiences and to distance themselves from knowing and understanding the life situations and experiences of community members, as well as from the relationship of service learning to social justice (McEwen).

Magolda, in a five-year longitudinal study of 101 students at Miami University of Ohio, found four qualitatively different kinds of knowing and gender-related patterns within three of the four ways. Three concepts important in students' learning are: confirmation, contradiction, and continuity. Confirmation serves to affirm or support students in their learning, contradiction to offer challenges, and continuity to provide connections with or a familiar base from which students can engage in their learning. Magolda's work for service learning was summarized through her three principles of validating the student as a knower, situating learning the students' own experience, and defining learning as jointly constructing meaning. Through skillfully constructed and conducted reflection, students can be led to understand their learning as meaning jointly constructed by

themselves, fellow students, faculty, community members, and community-based organization staff (cited in McEwen, 1996).

Chickering (1969), through his research in the 1960s, describes college student development through seven vectors:

Vector 1: Developing competence: Encompassing intellectual competence physical and manual skills, interpersonal competence, and an overall sense of competence.

Vector 2: Managing emotions: Developing an increasing awareness of both positive and more difficult emotions and learning how to handle and integrate these emotions in appropriate ways.

Vector 3: Moving through autonomy toward interdependence: Developing emotional and instrumental independence, which lead to a recognition and acceptance of interdependence.

Vector 4: Developing mature interpersonal relationships: Developing tolerance and appreciation of differences and a capacity for true and healthy intimacy.

Vector 5: Establishing identity: Developing a solid and comprehensive sense of one's own being.

Vector 6: Developing purpose: Clarifying goals and making plans in regard to one's vocation, interests, and lifestyle.

Vector 7: Developing integrity: Clarifying a personally valid set of beliefs that have some internal consistency and that provide at least a tentative guide for behavior (Chickering & Reisser, 1993, p 43-52).

Chickerings' vectors are important to service learning because they provide awareness of the kinds of psychosocial issues students may be facing as they engage in service learning. A first

or second year student may be struggling with issues of competence or a sense of confidence, or with becoming less dependent on others while a senior student may be facing prominent issues of life purpose or congruency within his or her life (cited in McEwen, 1996).

Chickering & Reisser (1993) identified seven key influences on student development: institutional objectives, institutional size, student-faculty relationships, curriculum, teaching, friendships and student communities, and student development programs and services. Development is fostered when the following conditions exist:

1. Impact increases as institutional objectives are clear and taken seriously and as the diverse elements of the institution and its programs are internally consistent in the service of the objectives (p. 266).
2. When student-faculty interaction is frequent and friendly and when it occurs in diverse situations calling for varied roles and relationships (p. 269).
3. An educationally powerful curriculum exists (p. 270).
4. Active learning encourages student faculty contact and cooperation among students, gives prompt feedback, emphasizes time on task and high expectations, and respects diverse talents and ways of knowing (p. 272).

These influences suggest that the effectiveness of service learning is affected by the institution's support, or lack thereof, as well as by the nature of the contact and interactions among students, faculty, and community service providers. Chickering's (1960s) work supports service learning as a significant means of creating opportunities for active learning. Two of the influences serve as reminders of the importance of respecting diverse learning styles and providing a variety of situations for student learning and development (cited in McEwen, 1996). Astin's theory (1984) of student involvement endeavored to identify factors in the college environment that significantly

affect the student's persistence in college. Astin found that the factors that contributed to the student's remaining in college suggested involvement, whereas those that contributed to the student's dropping out implied a lack of involvement. The most important and pervasive factor was the student's residence. Living in a campus residence was positively related to retention and this positive effect occurred in all types of institutions and among all types of students regardless of sex, race, ability, or family background (Astin, 1973, 1977, 1982; Chickering, 1974). The study also showed that students who join social fraternities or sororities or participate in extracurricular activities of almost any type are less likely to drop out. Participation in sports, particularly intercollegiate sports, has an especially pronounced positive effect on persistence. Other activities that enhance retention include enrollment in honors programs, involvement in ROTC, and participation in professors' undergraduate research projects (Astin). One of the most interesting environmental factors that affected retention was holding a part-time job on campus. Such work that includes work-study combinations, has the same effect as residential living: students spend time on campus increasing the likelihood that he or she will come into contact with other students, professors, and college staff and relying on the college as a source of income can result in a greater sense of attachment to the college. Findings concerning the effects of different types of colleges are relevant to the theory of involvement. The most consistent finding is that the student's chances of dropping out are substantially greater at a two-year college than at a four-year college, and the negative effects of attending a community college are observed even after the variables of entering student characteristics and lack of residence and work are considered (Astin, 1975, 1977). Most students are commuters and attend college on a part-time basis, thus, manifest less involvement simply because of their part-time status.

Astin (1984) identified three pedagogical theories: (a) the subject matter theory; (b) the resource theory that said high-achieving students enhance the quality of the learning environment for all students; and (c) the individualized or eclectic theory. According to Chickering & Associates, (1981) this theory assumes that no single approach to subject matter, teaching, or resource allocation is adequate for all students, but rather attempts to identify the curricular content and instructional methods that best meet the needs of the individual students. This theory emphasizes electives along with the philosophy of student personnel work, including guidance, counseling, placement, student support, self-paced instruction. The most obvious limitation to this is the cost to implement because each student requires considerable individualized attention. According to Astin the most precious institutional resource may be student time. The extent to which students can achieve particular developmental goals is a direct function of the time and effort they devote to activities designed to produce these gains. The time and energy that the student invests in family, friends, job, and other outside activities represent a reduction in the time and energy the student has to devote to educational development. Academic and nonacademic decisions made by administrators and faculty can affect the way students spend their time and the amount of effort they devote to academic pursuits. Things like honors programs, academic involvement, student-faculty interaction, athletic involvement, and involvement in student government all lend support to the involvement theory and lead to student persistence in remaining in school. Weiner (1979) argued that research suggests that students' degree of involvement in learning tasks can be influenced by whether they believe that their behavior is controlled by internal or external factors, and said that even if students tend to view their locus of control as internal, involvement may be further contingent on whether the internal factors are controllable (dependent on effort) or uncontrollable (dependent on ability). The effectiveness of any attempt to increase student

involvement is highly contingent on the student's perceived locus of control and personal inclinations (Astin). The importance of this involvement theory rests in the fact that all institutional policies and practices—those relating to academic and nonacademic matters—can be evaluated in terms of the degree to which they increase or reduce student involvement. With this in mind, it would be easy to assess all college personnel's activities in terms of their success in encouraging students to become more involved in the college experience.

Challenges to Service Learning

Developing civic leaders and productive citizens has been a central goal of higher education since the founding of colonial colleges (Antonio, Astin, & Cress 2000). Higher education is once again reemphasizing citizenship and community building as central goals of higher education in educating students for their future roles in a democratic society (Astin, 1996; Barber, 1992; Bok & Newman, 1992; Boyer, 1994; Levine, 1994). Campus Compact, formed in 1985, is a coalition of 620 college and university presidents whose primary mission is to promote institutional goals to help students develop the values and skills of citizenship through community service. Some studies have found that instructional reform at higher education institutions is more likely to be successful if the change motivates faculty to participate on both intrinsic and extrinsic levels (Eimers, 1997; Serow, Brawner, & Demery, 1999). Although faculty may be initially optimistic about implementing aspects of the university's vision for undergraduates, they feel constrained by traditional cultural paradigms and operating procedures. Integrating service into general education programs may be a stated value on behalf of institutional leadership; but without congruence between the values held by faculty and the priorities of tenure and promotion, the integration of service into the curriculum is not likely to occur (Zlotkowski, 1996).

Summary

Advocates of youth service can be divided into those who stress the reform of youth and those who stress the reform of education. The reform of youth approach stresses the power of service to meet the basic objectives of schools: promoting the personal, social, and intellectual development of young people and preparing them to become involved and effective citizens. Those who make education reform their chief concern are more likely to emphasize service as a part of the academic curriculum and to urge its integration into the regular activity of schools (Conrad & Hedin, 1991). Service-learning educators assert that service learning can have a variety of anticipated learning and developmental outcomes. In the area of learning and cognitive development, students who engage in service-learning may develop greater complexity in their thinking, ethical commitments regarding themselves, their lifestyles, and what they know and believe; movement toward higher levels of moral reasoning, development and clarity about their faith and spirituality. Developmental theorists such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and others who stress learning as an interaction with the environment have said that development occurs as individuals strive to come up with more satisfying and complex ways to understand and act on their world. Coleman (1977) contrasts this experiential approach to learning with what he terms information assimilation as used in most classroom instruction. Information assimilation consists of receiving information that has been presented through symbolic media, organizing the information into principles, inferring a particular application from the general principle, and applying the principle in a non-classroom situation. The experiential approach of service learning generates and assimilates information through an entirely different sequence of steps. First, a student performs an action; then he or she observes its effects, understands these effects in a particular instance, understands the general principle in operation, and applies the principle in new circumstances. Both

approaches have strengths and weaknesses. The strength of the information-assimilation model is that it can impart large amounts of information and systematically develop principles and generalizations from that information. Its concomitant weaknesses are that instruction may bog down in the presentation, the information may never be applied in practice, and thus the information is not really learned.

The strengths and weaknesses of the service-learning approach are just the reverse (Conrad & Hedin, 1991). The weaknesses are the less efficient presentation of information and the danger that students will not draw out principles and generalizations from practice. The strengths are that it counters the distancing abstraction of much classroom instruction by placing information in context, with the real-life nuances and applications that any fact or principle must have if it is to carry genuine and useful meaning, that it motivates the learner by providing connections between academic content and the problems of real life; and that it aids in retention of knowledge, as learning is made personal and applied in action. (Conrad & Hedin).

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to discover students' perceptions of the effects of service learning on college undergraduates and to increase our understanding of how service learning connects students-institutions-communities. Unique perspectives and understanding of how students feel and think about service learning are pertinent for study in that insight may be provided for current and future educational challenges.

The literature review supports the foundation of the study by revealing the advantages of service learning to students. Due to the lack of research and because service-learning programs have not become well connected to the academic core of most institutions that house them, this study provides an opportunity to look at another way to help students connect what they are learning to the school and the community.

The major components of Chapter 3 provide explanation as to the methodology of the study. First, the selection of a qualitative research design is discussed, along with the use of the interview. Next, the selection of the participants and the setting of the study have been presented. The instrumentation for the study is discussed, including the development and procedures for pilot testing of the student interview guide. Methods for data collection, including initial contact and interviewing methods are discussed. Data analysis and report preparation will follow as the fifth section of Chapter 3. In the sixth section, measures taken to ensure the fidelity, dependability, and generalizability of the study are presented. Finally, a summary of the components of Chapter 3 has been included.

Design of the Study

For this study, I have chosen to use methodology anchored in a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is a broad term that encompasses a variety of strategies including participant observation and in-depth interviewing. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) describe qualitative research as following the phenomenological tradition, which is to understand social phenomena from the actor's own perspective. This type of research can be characterized by five traits: (1) the natural setting is the direct source of data and the research is the key instrument; (2) the written results are descriptive; (3) the focus is on process rather than outcomes; (4) data are analyzed inductively; (5) meaning is of essential concern (cited in Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 1994).

Consistent with these characteristics, I have used a qualitative study using a grounded theory design. This design requires that the researcher attempt to derive a theory by using "multiple stages of data collection" and "constant comparison of data" (Creswell, 1994, p. 12).

I used a comparative, multi-participant approach. This approach was appropriate for a variety of reasons. First, my attempt was to determine more than just the perceptions students have for a service-learning experience. Through the use of in-depth interviews using open-ended questions, I explored the impact of this experience on community college students. From these data, I attempted to develop a theory of student involvement in service learning as an element of the overall community college role. Second, I opened with an open-ended question that guided the study, and the additional questions were revised as additional participants were interviewed. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) described this process as a funnel, rather than beginning a study too specifically. Third, the multi-participant case study approach is comparative in nature. With each case study,

ongoing comparison and contrast allowed for further consideration regarding generalizability (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p.69).

The design of this study suggested that a sample be intentionally selected that might best inform the purpose. For this reason, I used the strategy of purposeful sampling, defined as choosing "particular subjects to include because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 71-72). Conrad and Haworth (1997) similarly suggest that "If a credible claim is to be made that our findings can be generalized from individual interviewees to each case as a whole then the sample must be substantively representative of the population it claims to represent" (p. 215). They have said it is not necessary to obtain representation on every variable or parameter. At VHCC, the population consisted of 25 students enrolled and involved in service learning. I attended a celebration where I explained my purpose and asked for volunteers from among the student population. Thirteen students volunteered for my study and were interviewed at their convenience. At MECC, the college liaison provided me with a list of 15 students enrolled and involved in service learning. Eleven of the students were interviewed.

Because the purpose of this study was to describe students' service learning experiences and how these experiences enhanced their college experience, it was crucial to identify those students who were actively engaged in service learning. In addition, for the purpose of developing a theory, purposeful sampling allowed for a selection of participants who were enrolled in and involved in service-learning activities.

Specifically, I interviewed 24 students at two community colleges from a population of 40 students. To identify these people I contacted institutional liaisons such as department chairs, college deans, and student affairs professionals. A demographic data sheet was completed on the

students who volunteered to participate in the study that helped to intentionally categorize these individuals according to criteria such as gender, race, marital status, years in college, length of time spent in service learning, and whether or not individuals would sign up for service learning again. A demographic profile was obtained from each student (See Appendix C). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) refer to this process as stratification and acknowledge that it is an important process but also warn that the "open nature of qualitative inquiry precludes the ability to know either all of the important selection criteria or the number of interview sessions necessary to gather adequate data" (p.25). This design has its limitations in that it is time consuming and the scope of the study in terms of participants is narrower than that which might accompany a different design. In this particular case, breadth was traded for depth (Glesne & Peshkin). Also, this approach has the potential for being intrusive; therefore permission was granted to conduct the study by the Institutional Review Board. Gaining access to a group of individuals and engaging in exploratory interviews required extensive planning and the cooperation of both the individuals being interviewed and the institutions. In addition, there was a limited number of participants which raised questions about generalizability, an important concept of grounded theory (Glesne & Peshkin). Finally, although following a grounded-theory approach indicates a degree of generalizability, this study should not be generalized beyond the students interviewed. This was limited and for this reason placed limits on the ability to replicate the study (Creswell, 1994). This limitation was evident particularly because I interviewed only those who had been identified as being involved, rather than including those considered not involved in students' service learning experiences.

Setting and Selection of Participants

The setting for this study was Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC) and Mountain Empire Community College (MECC). Participants in this study were purposefully selected, because of their direct experience with service learning at the college, from a population of thirty-six students. The interviewer was stationed on the community college campuses in a room conveniently located to the mainstream of student traffic. Twenty-four students were interviewed. Thirteen students were individually interviewed at VHCC and 11 students were interviewed at MECC.

Procedures

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from East Tennessee State University's Institutional Review Board. The college presidents were both contacted requesting permission to perform the study, and permission was granted from both. A letter of introduction was sent to the Presidents of VHCC and MECC (See Appendix B). Consent forms were required of all research participants (See Appendix A). Interviews were scheduled in phases based on the availability and convenience of the participant. Prior to the interview, participants were given a description of the study and an Informed Consent Form. A demographic data sheet was completed on each participant prior to the interview (See Appendix C).

Qualitative research typically involves two types of data collection methods: participant-observation and in-depth interviews. Given the nature of this research project, the primary method of data collection in this study was semi-structured, in-depth interviews (See appendix D). In-depth interviewing allowed the gathering of "descriptive data in the

subjects' own words so that the researcher could develop insights on how students interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 96). In this case, a semi-structured interview assisted my research in two main ways. First, given the nature of the topic—community college students' perceptions of service learning—it was necessary to provide some guidance and general parameters as to the type of involvement that I explored. Second, while it was important to focus the conversation on service learning, it was important to acknowledge the integrity of the research design by allowing the subjects to share their stories without feeling overly constrained by the topic or the guiding questions. The extent to which I was able to balance these competing needs played a vital role in the quality of the overall data collection process. An interview guide was developed prior to the first interview (See Appendix D). Questions established a guide based on the information found in the review of the literature. The questions were then presented to the chair of this doctoral committee, committee liaisons, and peer debriefer. The questions were field tested with students from MECC and minor revisions were made. The purpose of the interview guide was to elicit responses from the students on their service-learning experiences.

I opened each interview with "What would you like for me to know about service learning?" From this point I was able to use the interview questions to fill the spaces. At that point, I had a more clear understanding of how well these questions were understood by the research participants. These questions continued to serve as guides (See Appendix D). Allowing some flexibility was consistent with the desired openness of the interviews and also allowed for in-depth probing. Patton said, "The purpose of open-ended interviewing is not to put things in someone's mind but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed. We interview people to find out from them

those things we cannot directly observe" (p. 278). Single-session interviews helped to discover the respondents' perceptions of the service-learning experience.

Techniques in active listening were employed to check the accuracy of understanding by the researcher. Active listening techniques involved restating what was said by the interviewee to check for clarity. Verbatim transcripts were made following each interview based on the audio (recorded) account of the interview.

Data Collection

I was the instrument of choice in this qualitative analysis. The data were a collection of detailed descriptions concerning service learning at two community colleges. Interviews were conducted and tape-recorded with written permission given prior to the actual interview. The purpose of conducting audio-taping was to be certain that no aspects of the interviewees' responses were accidentally or subjectively missed. According to Dexler (1970), interviews are either focused, with a structure to obtain specific information, or unstructured, with a more exploratory approach. He stated: "In an unstructured interview, the format is non-standardized, and the interviewer does not seek normative responses. Rather, the problem of interest is expected to arise from the respondent's reaction to the broad issue raised by the inquirer" (p. 68). Data collection techniques were as follows:

1. Open-ended, semi-structured personal interviews were conducted through use of an interview guide for the service participants.
2. Personal open-ended interviews were conducted with the following individuals: 13 students from VHCC and 11 students from MECC.

Data Analysis

Each interview was tape-recorded for the purpose of capturing all of the comments of the participants, along with the specific questions and follow-up, probing questions that were asked. In addition to the taped interview sessions, I used field notes, with written general comments during the interviews that captured such things as emotions, non-verbal communication, themes that I understood to be emerging in the conversation, or other observer comments. Following each interview, I made notes and attempted to reconstruct a written picture of the interview, including my reactions and any unique aspects. This was used along with the transcribed tape recordings and any other available documents to analyze the interview.

These interviews occurred over a somewhat lengthy period of time. Waiting until the end of the period to analyze the data would have resulted in an overwhelming process, and one that likely would have neglected many of the important benefits of this data collection method. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) said that analysis does not refer to a stage but is a continual process that begins as soon as the research begins. During the interviewing, I considered relationships, salience, meanings, and explanations, four analytic acts that lead to new questions and gave preparation to the period of analysis that follows the completion of data collection.

Consistent with this understanding, the constant comparative method was used. Important aspects of this process included beginning data collection, looking for key issues, collecting data that provided many incidents of the categories of focus, writing about these

categories, working with the data and emerging model, and engaging in sampling, coding, and writing as the analysis unfolded (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Haworth & Conrad, 1997).

The use of coding strategies served as the primary method of analyzing data. As data were collected and analyzed, sorting and interpretation resulted in the emergence of certain categories or themes. For my particular study, these categories were grouped around the students' descriptions of their service-learning experiences, their subjective views of these experiences, and the meaning they ascribed to these experiences.

Validity and Trustworthiness

The validity and trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis were addressed through a variety of methods. Primarily, I used member checks, both formal and informal, to determine the accuracy of my analysis, including any categories and themes that I identified as emerging.

The demographic data sheets, transcribed audio taped interviews, and researcher notes at the time of the interview were triangulated in the sense that all the data were analyzed by the researcher, particular themes were discussed with each participant, and overall themes were shared with all participants. Similarly, the process of triangulation addressed trustworthiness and validity in terms of discussing my ideas with participants. Finally, an audit trail was left that provided a history and connective path of the levels of method, data collection, and analysis.

Audio taping of the interviews by the investigator was done, and then transcription of the tapes was a necessary step supported by the literature (McCracken, 1990). The purpose of transcription allowed the researcher to review the verbatim conversations while looking for units of information. Patterns and answers started to emerge through sifting

collected data. This allowed me to make connections to develop a conceptual structure. A constant construct analysis was used to compare incidents applicable to each category. An integration of the categories and their properties was done to write the findings.

Clustered data were categorized for ease of use and cross-referencing. Establishing broad areas of categorization is usually the first phase of this process. Categorization led the researcher to develop theories pertaining to the research.

Credibility

This term is somewhat synonymous with verification in scientific inquiry referring to the method of choice to validate the collected data. Audio taping of the interviews and a peer de-briefer were used as a means to increase internal validity. Peer debriefing established an additional element of creditability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) advocated peer debriefing as a method to keep the honesty and integrity of the researcher operating at the utmost professional level. The researcher would never purposely influence the study results; however, a peer active in the research process helps to ensure that personal bias is not a factor. According to Lincoln and Guba the peer de-briefer should: (a) be someone with a similar age as the researcher, (b) have knowledge about qualitative research techniques as well as some working knowledge about the research topic, (c) not be an authority figure, and (d) keep a record of the interaction between them and the researcher throughout the study. A colleague from Mountain Empire Community College acted as peer debriefer. She has experience with counseling in the public and private sector as well as experience as the Director of Service Learning at MECC (Appendix D).

Summary

Twenty-four participants from a population of 36 students were selected by a purposeful sampling method and were interviewed using a student interview guide. Student responses were audio taped and transcribed for data analysis. The researcher analyzed and categorized the data so that patterns emerged and conclusions could be drawn.

In order to meet the standards of credibility and auditability, the researcher used tests of rigor by returning to and reviewing the data over and over to see if the constructs, categories, explanations, and interpretations made sense, and if they really reflected the nature of the phenomenon as recognized in the scientific and qualitative paradigms of research. To substantiate the study's credibility and auditability, an audit of the study was conducted. The auditor's report revealed the data to be accurate and believable (See Appendix C).

The qualitative case study analysis was designed to include as much information as possible to perform a thorough investigation. In this chapter, the procedural framework of the study has been presented. The investigator provided information concerning the population of the study, procedures undertaken, along with data collection and methods of analysis. Instrumentation followed to conclude the methodologies. Data analysis has been done in chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY RESULTS

The purpose of Chapter 4 is to present results of the data collection. The data techniques used in this chapter are those presented in Chapter 3. These techniques were designed to provide qualitative data regarding student perceptions of service learning. I used a student interview guide to gather data.

Discussion of Study Results

The purpose of this study was to discover students' perceptions of the effects of service learning on college undergraduates and to increase our understanding of how service learning connects students-institutions-communities. The study examined what impact this experience had on the students as well as whether or not the service learning was a success as determined by the goals of any service-learning program.

The strength of this study was the inquiry made with the people most involved with the service learning under investigation. Twenty-four participants were interviewed at two separate locations. These interviews were conducted one on one. Respondents participating in this study represented students from two community colleges. The response from all participants was positive. The interview was scheduled at a time most convenient to the students.

In this section, the findings are presented from the student interview sessions. The demographic profile is presented first. Then a discussion of the pertinent findings from the student interviews is presented. This section is divided into four topics: (a) a description of service learning; (b) personal, social, and cognitive outcomes; (c) the impact on academic learning; and (d) community /college impact. It is from this that the value or success of service

learning is constructed. This is presented in Chapter 5 along with conclusions and recommendations.

A demographic profile questionnaire was administered to all study participants to determine a study profile. The data in this inquiry indicated information on gender, ethnicity, student classification, marital status, employment, dependents, student status: first or second year, full or part-time student, and whether the participants would sign up for service learning again.

All of the students were caucasian, 58% of the participants were female, 96 students were full-time students, 62.5 % were single, 29 % were married, 8 % were divorced, and 17 % had dependents at home. Seventy-one percent were employed either full or part time, 87 ½ % had over one year of college. Forty-six percent had been involved with service learning for more than one year and 87 ½ % said they would sign up for service learning again.

Purposeful sampling was used. In identifying the participants, emphasis was placed on students who had been involved in service learning during the 2000-2001 academic school year. I contacted both Virginia Highlands and Mountain Empire Community College and was placed in direct contact with the service learning coordinator for each school. I was invited to both schools to meet with the students. After discussing my purpose for the study, 13 students volunteered at Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC), and 11 volunteered at Mountain Empire Community College (MECC). Interview times were scheduled for student convenience. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. Interviews were audio taped and notes were made during the interview. All tapes were transcribed and verified according to the notes made during the interview. Each student was debriefed at the end of the interview in that I summarized his/her comments and asked if there were any additional comments she or he would like to make. All

transcriptions were shared with the service-learning director at Mountain Empire who audited the tapes for accuracy and content.

Findings from the Student Interviews

Student interviews were transcribed and compared to the notes taken during each interview. Data were then categorized according to similarities and differences. From this the emerging topics of discussion emerged: (a) a description of service learning; (b) personal, social, and cognitive outcomes; (c) the impact on academic learning; and (d) community/college impact.

In the following sections I will discuss each of these four topics in detail along with direct quotes from the students to enhance the understanding of how the students perceive service learning in the community college. Pseudonyms are used to maintain anonymity and to help the descriptions flow smoothly. The value of service learning that emerged from these topics is presented in Chapter 5.

Students Define Service-Learning Experience

During the student interviews, the participants spoke openly and shared their feelings and thoughts about service learning at the community college. Within this topic they talked about: (a) their description of service learning; (b) the personal, social, and cognitive outcomes; (c) the impact of service learning on academic learning; and (d) community/college impact. Pseudonyms are used throughout to maintain anonymity and to help the descriptions flow smoothly.

Hands-On Experience

Many of the participants emphasized the "hands-on experience" of service learning and the positive feelings it gave them. One student in his second year of performing service said:

> It gives you the opportunity to apply what you are learning even if it's not in a helping community way, for instance, if you are in electricity, service learning

> will give you the opportunity to apply hands-on experience and work on a house for instance and the whole self-centered side of it would be your growth in your occupation.

Another student said it was "being able to use your experiences and expertise". Another said service learning was a "way for students to experience a field before they have actually decided that is what they want to make their career in, but rather gives them the chance to be involved hands on". A student who tutors in the schools, said she liked doing something while at the same time "learning something to better myself". Another student involved for the first time in service learning through MECC said:

> Service learning is a valued asset for those people who want to experience a field before they actually decide that is what they want to make their career in. It gives them the opportunity to actually be involved hands on and the finer parts are not going to be known about the occupation that they will pick up from the people or the experience.

Several of the students participated in tax preparation for the elderly and the low income and one student said she "looked forward to getting the hands-on experience because I knew I could use later everything I did learn". She had never been involved in service learning before, but when she first heard about it she thought it was "wonderful". One student majoring in accounting said she "learned more than I actually thought I would". She especially liked being able to access so much information and forms from the Internet.

Service within the schools is one of the largest forms of service learning, with numerous opportunities for students to tutor, mentor, counsel, and address other needs with the school community. Many of the tutors talked about their experiences of working in the schools. Daniel, his first year of service learning, said his service-learning experience had been inspirational. He said:

> You have to be understanding, open minded toward what the kids talk to you about, no matter what they are going to tell you whatever they feel they need to tell you and I have

had a few students who come out and tell me the problems at home and they do have problems at home and I just really feel that it is an inspirational thing.

Another student called her service learning experience at the middle school very "rewarding". She said:

> Like some days, I really don't want to drive over to the school and I'm like do I have to go cause I have so much to do with 19 hours of college classes and, then once I get over there and I leave, it is like the best feeling to know that I have helped the students
>
> .

Other students talked about their experiences working in the schools. One student who had been involved in service learning before said all of his service learning had been working with kids in the elementary school either one on one or in small groups. He talked about getting "behind the scene" and the "teacher's point of view". He said:

> Sometimes we come in and we don't get the feel of how the teacher feels because you just see the routine that has been planned and the process, and you don't get to know the teachers and their points of view and their feelings and this service-learning session I have actually gotten behind the scene and seen from the teacher's perspective. I learned lots of things, especially techniques for working with the children and meeting their needs as far as education.

He said "service learning is very productive for the children and their education process". Another student who worked in the schools as a tutor talked about the teacher she worked with and called her "wonderful" and a "friend". She said:

> Most of the children I have worked with have been special, hyperactive, and some of them abused. It has been very emotional and also very rewarding. I gained a lot of trust and love. I have learned a lot. I have learned a lot of patience and tolerance. I realize now more than ever that teaching is what I want to do. I have learned that every child is different with different needs, and you should have patience and not give up on a child.

One student serving in the Ambassador program talked about her kindergarten class experience and said it was a "great review of just fundamental sounds, coloring, paying attention skills, and listening skills" for her. She said she had benefited far more than just receiving the

scholarship for her service learning. Another elementary school tutor said he found he is "able to deal with kids in general a whole lot better now".

Mentoring

A couple of the participants said what they did had not benefited the kids they tutored, but they "had fun while they made the kids do their homework". One student said she had not had much experience with service learning and did not feel that "everyone is meant to be schooled" because she said "there is just no hope for everybody". But, she went on to say how she had talked with a "boy" who wanted to quit and found out he like motors and cars and told him there was a need for mechanics also. She said a lot of the kids she worked with were "hyper" but the teachers simply weren't buying that and insisted on their learning the material as much as they could. This tutor became more of a mentor than a tutor. She said:

> I worked with one kid in tutoring and I just don't feel like I strengthened anything. Even after tutoring he is still spelling the word, with, with an e, and he is in sixth grade and I guess it is sort of a pessimistic view of it but I just don't see why we are there. These kids are seen as problem kids. I guess I am a really bad tutor, but they would just want to sit there and play with my key chain, a gross little pig, and I let them play with it and they loved it. They talked a lot about school, especially the boys hate school, and they talk about quitting. One boy, he is a mess, in the sixth grade. He is 14 years old and he will have his driver's license in the 8th grade, and he was like, Yeah, when I get into the 8th grade I am quitting high school or I am quitting school, and I told him he couldn't until he was 18, and he goes I didn't know that. You have your whole life to flip burgers at McDonalds. When you get old and shut into a nursing home, you will have 20 more years to play super Nintendo. I was like why don't you just stay in school.

She said he still talks about hating his homework, but she also remembers hating homework and just wanting to "play".

Another student said she felt her service learning experience had not been ideal "as far as the wonderful effect". She tutors in the elementary school and said:

> The kids I tutor want to see me because they want to get out of class and not necessarily because I am changing their lives. I really like them and they are funny and I enjoy it when I get there but it is like a big strain on my day to get there. I don't see how what I do as a tutor will change or up the learning aptitude of the students but I know that overall it (service learning) is a good thing.

Christian Ethic

Some of the other students worked on service learning projects through clubs and Christian groups.

They were especially committed to their goal of helping others. One student said, you have "self focused, hands-on experience". He went on:

> Then there is the other side of it too where Jesus is about serving and that it is the ultimate key to leadership and to life, and so in doing this, we are serving people who are in need and helping them to become independent.

He went on to talk about his experience in Central America helping with the flooding problems. He said:

> It was the nastiest work I have ever done, but our team came together and we spent a week digging in rocks and mud. It was really hard work. It was awesome because all of these young kids were around us all the time, hundreds of them. They would come out everyday and they would get in the way and we would have to move them and they would be back in a few minutes hanging around again. We had a blast. I got experience laying PVC pipe, pouring concrete, gluing pipe together, doing grading work. We weren't having much luck until we decided to just pray about it. Then it all seemed to come together. We found this pipe that went straight down into a street below so we piped everything into this pipe and was able to take all the water out and the flooded part was soon dry as could be. It was amazing. It was a big thing like we had done an awesome job but no one knew what we were doing the whole time.

One student who began college in 2000 said he had participated in many service projects through clubs and felt it was not something that a person should do "expecting something back but should do it out of the goodness of their heart". He went on to say:

> You do get things back just to know that you have helped someone in need and there are material benefits because it does look good on resumes and applications but I do it because I enjoy it.

He called it "hands on community service and not just charity" through his club. He said he had learned skills like "carpentry, insulation, painting, drain work, all things my father did not teach me to do".

Personal Efficacy

Another student who was doing service learning through the Family Crisis Center said that it had showed her how to have stronger counseling skills and that listening to people was a big part of it. Now she says she tries to "guide them to their own conclusions rather than tell them" what they should do. She says she is sort of a feminist and really wants to help women who are in abusive or otherwise bad relationships to get out of them and get on their "own two feet". She told me that her parents divorced when she was very small and that she has always lived with her mother. She goes on:

> We deal with a lot of women. About 70 % of our clients are women. I don't know if that is because men are more likely not to go for help because they are socialized not to ask for help or what. The women we have are usually alcoholics or they are trying to struggle to keep from going back to being alcoholics. We have a few homeless and we try to show them where to go as far as shelters but overall most of our clients are women. I think it has a big thing to do with our society and how we raise our children, but little boys are raised not to cry or ask for help and little girls are raised to nurture and speak up when they need help. Sometimes I will get a phone call from a woman who has been beaten up by her husband and her kids witness it and I realize that my life isn't really that bad. I have been kind of sheltered because the problems I used to think that were bad I don't think anything about them now.

She told me that getting named the Hotline Counselor made her as "proud as receiving her Honors Certificates". She said it was probably one of the "best things I have ever gotten".

Social Benefits

Two students did their service learning through the food bank and had become friends. One was a traditional second year student and the other was an adult learner who had returned to school through the dislocated worker program. Both were working toward a business certificate. The younger of the two talked about how emotional the experience had been for her. She said she and her family had struggled to make ends meet when she was growing up and that she felt she had been sheltered from the "real world". She told me of her emotional experience of giving food to a mother and her four girls and hearing one of the kids exclaim about having food now. She said:

> It caused me to burst into tears that that little of a child realized that they did not have much to eat and that really bothered me. Our job was to categorize, package, and box food items like cereals, so that when they needed to find it they would be able to get to it quickly without having to look for it. I remember seeing infomercials about children going hungry in this country and seeing the places where they live that shouldn't even be standing. It was eye opening for me. In the restaurant where I work, a homeless man came in and the people I work with made fun of him. I asked them not to make fun of nobody. I gave him money and talked with him and he was shocked knowing that someone would help him.

Helping Others

The other said she was not the average return student. She talked about her children, her home, and her husband. She said she feels fortunate because she has the support of her husband and she knew she could always "dig down and find time to help out at the food bank". She said she had always helped with Boy and Girl Scouts in her own neighborhood but had never experienced anything like her work with the food bank.

One student talked proudly of his role with service learning. He spoke of a campus-wide effort to help needy families at Christmas as "something I created". He said:

> Each step as it went along I was involved with it. We didn't get to see the stuff given to the needy families but just knowing that it would help made everyone feel good. With this program, I learned how to communicate with people what you want, and organization is one

> of the things I learned. You have to be organized because if you aren't, the whole thing will blow up. This was done through a club that I am President of now and it will continue long after I am gone.

Community Awareness

Another student talked quietly about taking the service learning that was required as part of his sociology class. He said he had learned "that there are a lot of kids in foster care in his county". He went on:

> This class was different from any other class I ever took. It got me more involved in the community. I took it through a rural sociology class is how I got involved. I worked with the Court Appointed Special Advocate Agency (CASA). That is where I learned about the community, and the child abuse rate and how many children are put in foster homes. I did not get to participate in the training for the volunteers so all I have been able to do with the information so far is write reports with it and be an observer for the rest of it. The training lets you know what you can do and say to the children. Through the service learning experience, I learned that the abuse rates for children are so high here that the State is organizing a task force to study the reasons for it. I learned about the steps a federal office has to go through just to keep up.

This young man lives at home with his parents and has not given much thought to "real world" situations until this class. He was thoughtful as he talked about his service-learning experience and said he did not understand the magnitude of the problems kid have here until now.

Students, on their way to adulthood, experience social issues as well as personal issues. Many of our students feel they have been sheltered from the real world and are overwhelmed as the awareness of the unsolved societal problems grows. The impact that this service-learning experience had on their personal, social, and cognitive development follows.

Personal, Social, and Cognitive Growth.

"When I graduated from high school, I was voted last person in my class and now I am class president on campus so I have changed a little bit due to my service". A student now in his third year of college and involved with service learning for over two years told me as he continued:

> I first became involved in service learning when I was required to do it for a psychology class and I enjoyed it so I stayed with it even though after that class I was no longer required to do it. At that time, I worked with local food banks, and miscellaneous type things. I gained a lot of friends. I actually learned how to deal with people and how to react to them. Greg was talking about how immature people are always about what they want, and I think I have definitely matured with my work because I see the world not just as my own little world and as my own little circle that involves only me.

Teamwork

"Stop telling me what to do" another student was told as he and his teammates worked together on a project in Belize, Central America. He said:

> I had frustrations at first because I wanted to jump in and rip things to shreds but I know that my personality can become annoying to others. We finally came to a balance where I understood o.k., this is what you can do, this is what is expected, this is required, and we were able to come to an agreement. I know that I have been called to be a leader but once that you know that, people are always looking for someone to stand up and take the lead, you learn about how life functions in all given situations. I have learned how leadership is not a dictatorship but it's more of a servant's heart that people will want to follow and trying to have that ingrained in me over and over again, that to have the heart of a servant leader and not of a dictator. That is a big part of it all for me.

Civic Responsibility

Another student said because of her work in the food bank she had become more aware of what is going on in the community. She said she has become "more sensitive to the problems people face and teachers face in education with situations that may come up". "There is always somebody who has it harder than you do and it helps you to get through what has happened to you and to not dwell on your problems", she said as she quietly talked about her experience with the food bank, preparing boxes of food, taking information from the people who came in, and then distributing the food. Another VHCC student said she was "already a good listener" but that through her service learning experience she had gained a greater insight into her own childhood and she felt she could relate to kids better and talk to them easier now. She said she hadn't been

"moved" by the experience and didn't know if that perhaps made her a "shallow" person. She went on:

> We were talking in class one day and this girl broke down into tears and I was like, oh my God, I am so alone. I did learn more about like schooling for people and I just don't think when you get someone for tutoring who is 25 and she can't grasp adding and subtracting positive and negative numbers, you know, college life isn't for everybody. And when you are trying to help somebody with a critical think paper and they can't understand the directions that well, and they are 25 years old, and they can't fully process a thought without you coaching them through it. Well, I learned a lot of that, and well I guess I didn't really grasp what service learning is all about.

Group Awareness

She went on to tell me how she liked "working in groups".

> I liked having other tutor support with me, having the guy tell me about how to tutor. I liked having a group of three or four kids. Groups just seem to go off each other because there is an energy there and people relate to one another. It is social, and it is always more awkward and tense when it is one on one. She said she really liked going out and cleaning up a park or planting a tree more so than going in with a group of kids to tutor.

She says she probably will not sign up for service learning again:

> I don't know why and it isn't that I don't like kids, because I really do, I love the kids but I felt better and more involved. I like being outdoors and I like interacting with people. When you go to school, these kids don't want to be there, and you don't really want to be there. So I start thinking, I want to go home, I have bills to pay. Twenty hours is not a lot to ask but when that goes along with school, homework, two jobs and then the time in between is just the time you need to keep sane because I am in my early 20s and there is a lot of socializing there. So when you are there in the classroom and kids are staring outside it is hard not to stare with them, but it is different when you are out and you're picking up trash and you know you get to canoe afterwards and everyone else wants to do it too. Tutoring was every day for me, but it was a different experience every day with different kids. I felt like the kids were looking at me saying, o.k. stupid, you are my tutor, you are supposed to know this. It is probably finding out you are going to be a tutor for the first time kind of feeling. Tutor training was offered, but I missed it.

Teacher Preparation

One student who has been actively involved in tutoring in the school system before said she had been "challenged this year by the children". Many of them had special needs, were hyperactive or abused, and every day had been an emotional one for her. She said she had learned a lot, "especially patience and tolerance". Along with that came the "love and trust that the children had to give. I realize now more than ever that I want to teach", she said:

> I have learned a lot that will help me when I become a leader. The teacher was going around the room asking the kids to name their heroes and telling them just what a hero is and one of the kids I work with said I was his hero. That was the most wonderful experience I have had all year.

She said she had volunteered before but that this year she was in the Ambassador Program and was receiving scholarship funds. She said "it is not just about the money—that is beneficial, but you learn stuff that will help you in the future". She told me that an experience like this "changes the children and it changes you". "Nobody realizes the effect you have on children until you are actually there with them. They carry that with them forever". This student drives from a neighboring county to school and then to her tutoring location every day. She said with her two-year old daughter at home she really is spread thin for time but "loves her work".

Appreciation for Diversity

One student who tutors in the elementary school said she doesn't think that tutoring makes her feel a different way but that other service experiences have had a tremendous impact on her. One activity that she did through the Christian Club "shook her up" and affected the way she had always thought about "people in wheelchairs". She said:

> We painted a trailer for a couple in wheelchairs. I walked into their trailer and there was a bed with chains to pull them up, rails in the bathroom, and their kitchen looked like a four-year olds playroom. I thought I would throw up the whole time I was there. I have always

made this horrible mistake of talking to people in wheelchairs like they were retarded, whether they are or not. The painting we did—we laughed and talked about music and just tatoos and stuff, just anything with a common thread like that and just had great conversation and that was good. I don't have friends in wheelchairs and in this area I don't have any friends that are black. It is just not common, you don't see that. That experience altered the way I see the world and my perspective of people we don't see and have no idea they are out there.

She talked about having integrity throughout her life and being committed to her word. I asked her how she got involved in service learning and she said she would not have known about it if there hadn't been a community service fair on campus that "showed the students they should get involved". She told me that God prompted her heart to get involved and that she will do it next semester "not because I want to, but because I know that it is good for me". When I asked her why she did not like tutoring she said:

> Establishing a relationship with a kid and then backing out of that —everybody hates to do that. I hate picking a kid's brain with homework, so I asked questions about his family. The kid that I tutor has a horrible home life. We have a chance to just laugh a lot and he is real hard around the edges, but I like that kid and I think that was a good time for him.

She said that service learning had caused "my eyes to be opened with more particular needs of our community like disabled people, illiterate people, or abused people. We always have to be aware of that".

Leadership Skills

One student, actively involved in service learning on campus, said he was instrumental in getting the Service Week on campus started. He said:

> My biggest project here on campus was Service Week where one week the SGA officers along with the other clubs get involved to help the needy people that our community serves. For the weeklong event, we had drop boxes distributed all over campus and we collected coats, shirts, toys, food, and shoes. Last year we helped over 200 families and this year we helped over 400 families. We do this right around Christmas time after break, and we invite community agencies that get the stuff to come on campus. The whole campus comes together for this project that I started. I learned a lot about organization through this. If you aren't organized the whole thing will fall apart.

This young man who has been involved in service learning before said he had traveled to Africa last year and served on committees while there trying to get their service learning program off the ground.

He talked about the service exchange program where two of the MECC students will go to Africa to show them how to test soil. "Knowledge" is the biggest thing for the people in Africa because "they do not know the proper way to test soil". He told me about other things the college wanted to do, such as an Honors Program. He said his school is "ahead of other colleges and universities in their service learning program". He went on to say that he "travels a lot and knows about other colleges like Hampton University where the students are not involved in getting out into the community". He said:

> We do talk to other students about service week and we emphasize to them that right now if you plan on going on to other colleges or even jobs, they look at application wise what you get involved in at school, community work, community services, outreach programs. They are asking that right now for scholarships or to get into colleges, and it would look good on applications for employment. One thing we do tell them is that it does pay off. For instance, someone with a 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) and no service and someone with a 3.0 GPA with service on his record would be hired before the 4.0 because it shows they do get involved.

He told me his aspirations. He said he had an "inkling" that he wanted to go into politics before, but now he was passionate about it because he wanted to be the one to "make a difference" and according to him that is "what really counts".

> You have poverty here but extreme poverty in Namibia. We saw the country from the eyes of the people who live there. We stayed in their homes and we were around them 24 hours a day, tent houses and stuff. Knowing that we might have made a difference in their lives in any way, even the soil samples because it only rains 2 to 3 days out of the year there, and the soil well they did not know how to properly test the soil. We helped the college there with their orientation. The Namibia students came here during our election. They were so fascinated with our elections for president. They were here for a week and a half. We took them to the Biltmore House and they lived with us. They were fascinated with things we take for granted, like lights and remote control television. We took them to the election polls and they emailed us after they went back to see who won the election. Words simply cannot explain it all.

Developing a Meaningful Philosophy of Life

One student who has been in school for three years, is full-time, works part time, and has done service learning more than once, said he lost his job and knows how hard it is to ask for help especially the first time. He thinks just reaching out to people helps those who are too proud to ask but whose circumstances warrant helping. He said he tries to encourage service learning on campus as much as possible but feels many students are involved in activities in their hometowns. He called his service learning eye opening:

> I have made contacts with people that I would not have met just going to class. It kind of opens up your eyes to not take things for granted so much and sometimes like picking up trash has a benefit like self-beautification, or helping someone with learning computer skills. I guess that students may take knowing computer skills for granted because it was easy for them to learn. Thirty years down the road there will be some sort of new technology we will have to get used to all over again.

This same student is Treasurer of the SGA on campus and said his service experiences are not part of a course assignment. He says he has been "service oriented since his scout days". He thinks the Girl Scouts could do more service-oriented activities and "would grow" because of it. He talked about his Eagle Scout Award and how it was awarded. He said it is more important if people just volunteer to do service learning activities but said sometimes they just need a little encouragement. He said:

> It is all about sacrifice, sometimes we get so narrow-minded and focused in our own little world that we don't see a need for service learning. Working with computers today, you seldom see a human face. That will be a real challenge in itself for the next century getting volunteers for some of the youngsters who communicate basically on the computer without ever seeing a face.

He said he hoped to get more involved with community activities but has been really busy with school, job and a wife. "I was raised on a farm and church wasn't stressed all that much but I do intend to do more".

Personal Rewards

One of the student tutors talked about transferring to another school and yet she has close ties to a student she would like to continue to help even after she transfers. She talked about how angry this child is, because his mom left him and his three brothers. "I actually think I am going to come back" to work with him at least once a month. She said she felt she had been more of a mentor (to him) than a tutor. She said they would spend the first 30 minutes on homework and the next 15 minutes just "talking about things". "I learned that you don't really learn something until you teach it. You have no idea what you are learning until you turn around and teach someone about it and I have had to do my homework in order to be a tutor".

Preparation for Employment

Some of the tutors said they had gotten very close and personal with their supervisors. One said she understood better the pressures teachers are experiencing due to the third grade Standards of Learning Objectives. She said:

> Sometimes we come in and we don't get the feel of how the teacher feels because you just see the routine that has been planned and the process. You don't get to know the teachers, their points of view and their feelings. This service-learning session I have actually gotten behind the scene and that has helped me to see from the teacher's perspective. I have learned techniques from her for working with the children.

When I asked her what other students thought about the service-learning component, she said a lot of them think it is just another "work-study".

> I don't think they know how involved or how productive the actual service-learning experience can be for all involved. I would say that they do not have enough background information about what it is and what they would be doing. I know that I have grown personally, improved my education, and improved my own skills necessary to work with children, such as communication and listening. I have also learned some leadership skills.

Another student told me how very personally rewarding it was for her to have a child "get excited about learning". She told me about the experience:

> I had worked with this child a long time and he had never shown any interest and then all of a sudden he said, can you tell me more about this. It is amazing to me to see a student who really does learn.

This same student is doing her service learning through the Americorp Program.

> I am getting work experience with people who will one day be my professional peers. I am making a difference with the children and I am learning so many skills and so much benefit in my life about the way I feel about life. The time I have spent with the children has been a personal benefit to me—one that I would not trade for anything else.

She went on:

> It is not all happy things, especially when you are working in schools like this. You will see children who are bad and have so many bad things in their life. It was really hard for me at first to see that so many of them do not have anyone who cares about them, but all things aside you could be that person for them. You could talk to them and help them feel that they are not alone.

Researchers say that the mind is social and that learning is a by-product of social activities. Some of the activities that the students engaged in were not directly connected to their future work aspirations. But it helped them to see their lives in relation to others and offered them opportunities for growth in moral, social, and civic awareness. I will focus on the student's service learning because it plays a role in encouraging those aspects of identity associated with societal relatedness and social responsibility.

Some of the students talked about their service activities addressing real needs and being part of an organized program. Chris said that he had worked with local food banks and that he had learned "how to deal with people" as well as "react" to them. Zack talked about his "team" working on the flooding problems in Belize and how "we" did it all. "It was a big thing like we had done an awesome job but no one knew what we were doing the whole time". Tonya said she had "an eye opening" experience working at the food bank. Seeing the infomercials on TV was one

thing but actually seeing it in the community and witnessing the hungry children or the homeless man coming in for food made her feel good about her role at the food bank. Mike said working at the food bank showed him that there is always somebody who has it "harder than you do". Betty worked with a group of students and helped to paint a trailer for a couple in wheelchairs. She told me she sees things differently now and that it has "altered the way I see the world". She told me about the good time they had while they were painting the trailer and that they all had things in common that she found very easy to relate to and talk about. She had to reflect on her own personal values in facing this challenging situation but the activity had a profound impact on her "thinking" about people in wheelchairs. Mandy said she loved "helping coal miners' families have Thanksgiving meals". She said:

> I think I loved this just because of the memories I have of Thanksgiving and to think that someone didn't know what it was like to have a huge feast. I wanted to give them that. For spring break, a group of us went to Florida and offered free van rides home for those who partied too much. I learned compassion on that trip.

John who saw himself as doing community service, and not just charity, said:

> We go out and try to do different things. We try to keep in touch with all of these organizations and find out what they need and how we can be of service to them and individual families too. We try to do some campus recruiting also. My being involved with these groups has helped my self-esteem.

Many of the students talked about their experiences in the school systems as having profound impact especially when it enabled them to perceive "where the teachers are coming from".

Tammy said she had done a lot of tutoring and working in the schools, but had never really realized just how pressured the teachers are now since the implementation of the Standards of Learning. She said even Kindergarten teachers feel the pressure of accountability for what they are teaching the students.

Joyce said, "The teacher I have been with has been wonderful and a friend". Yet another told me how in order to tutor her kindergarten students, she had to do a review of fundamental sounds, and basic skills that are taught in kindergarten. The students who did tax preparation for the elderly and low income said they had "learned how to communicate with older people" and how sensitive they have to be working with people on personal financial information. Mike said working as a tutor at school helped him with his "church kids", to be more understanding and to get closer to them. Chris said through his service learning he had found out more about agencies in the community. He said:

> It allowed me to start a center for deaf and hearing impaired in my community. This required a lot of thought to get the center open, and a lot of help from the outside. I would not have known this information, if I had not done the service-learning experience. It gave me an understanding that I want to work with the deaf and hard of hearing, because I am a sign language person also. I have always been interested in this. I learned what agencies to turn to should I need services from that agency, and what they offered. I worked as an intern for one summer at the Junction Center. It was fun because I wasn't tied down to paper and pencil all day.

Such experiences caused the students to reflect on the conflict between their preconceptions about "groups" of people and the reality of individuals who urgently need help. Personal benefits such as heightened self-confidence and improved self-esteem were derived from these experiences, but emphasis from the students' perceptions was placed on helping others more than on themselves. Many of them spoke about helping others and being involved with the community to help those in need. Leah spoke of strengthening her counseling skills while working with women in a shelter said, "I hope I don't ever have to experience things like that, because my heart goes out to these people". "All it is is being human". Or another student who worked in a food bank said, "There are so many people out there who need help because they have fallen on hard times". Mindy who worked in the tutoring lab said, "Helping prepare dinners for the coal mining families, knowing they could not afford it, was awesome for me to be able to provide that for them". A student who

worked with problem kids said, "I want to do special education, because I know that I am prepared to take on all the difficulties that might affect me in the future".

When I asked them what other students knew about service learning many of them said that college students just do not want to give up their time for something that they don't get any return from. Zack who is a full-time student and has done service learning more than once said that:

> A community college is seen as well you don't spend much time here so as a result of that I think that the importance of service is down a lot, and people are still searching for what they are going to do because they don't know just yet. The importance of service learning is down a lot here because students are still trying to figure out what am I going to do, where am I going to go, even though there is a significant number of people here on campus who do service learning.

Cathi who is a full-time student involved in service learning for the first time said she thinks many students do not want to be "told" they have to do something. Another reason is that they get attached to the kids and they learn stuff with the kids and they really end up loving it but then they have to say good-bye and it hurts. She said:

> Halfway through it, they get attached to the kids and they learn stuff with the kids and they really end up loving it. I know a lot of these people are going to miss those kids and a majority started out not wanting to do it but a lot of them are coming out really glad that they did.

Dana said the students "give up their spring breaks to do service learning and it is a good thing". She said, however, that a lot of students don't think that someone may need them that hour or two hours and they are too "self-absorbed". Joy said, "A lot of them believe it is a waste of time and they have no idea but once they get involved they realize how rewarding it is". A student club leaders said:

> Students on campus do not know a lot about it and unless they are involved in a club or involved on campus, they are not aware of the opportunities that we have and that is a lot of their doing because after class they just leave the campus. They think that at the community college there isn't a lot to do here anyway.

Betty said she thought there were a lot of kids who would be involved in service learning just "because their friends are". But then she went on to say that a lot of kids do not like it "because it is a requirement for class". She went on to say that a lot of kids may not have the monetary means and because of their situations they don't see the need because they have to "work so hard". Wendi said she "had never given service learning a thought until she took this one particular psychology class where it was a requirement". Mike who because of his service learning has a better self-esteem said "maybe students think of third world countries and Peace Corps". He said, "I don't think they are really aware of the need to be connected to the community or that there are people in this community who are literally starving". He went on to talk about the work of the Food Bank and the influence of the Director. It seems a child had written a note to them thanking them for giving his family food to eat and said the family would have starved if it had not been for them. "This is our community talking; the need is here", he said.

Many of the students felt the same way –that the college students just did not understand the relevance of service learning or that the need is there in their own communities. John said he did not think students knew how involved service learning was or "how productive the actual service learning experience can be for you and the people you are working for". Faye an adult learner in the accounting program, a full-time student, and a beginner in service learning, said:

> Sadly, I think that a lot of the students that I have come into contact with think it is a hassle. I am older and the people I associate with are older and busier because they have children so it is difficult. It is not that they don't want to do it but it's harder for them to do it. The younger classmates lack maturity in their overall view of college. I think that service learning should be incorporated in the high schools because a lot of the kids here still live with mom and dad who are still paying for their college. Their attitude is, as long as I am passing what difference does it make. If students were to get involved in service learning in high school, they would gain a certain level of pride in their work. I told this one girl life was going to smack her in the fact one day because of her attitude. She was happy with a D because she was passing without any effort.

Tammy and Mel both in the accounting program and both in their third year of community college work, said they "did not know a lot about service learning" until this year when it was incorporated into their accounting class. James himself a social welfare major, talked about the need for students who are going into a service field to get involved in service learning because it would give them an idea of what goes on in the community.

Several of the students talked about the importance of working together in teams or in groups and how that intensified their experience. The group that went to Belize worked together to alleviate the flooding problems. Zack talked about the teamwork and how they listened to each other and "talked the problems out". He said he had made a lot of people networks through service learning and feels he can call up anyone to ask for help. Margie said she especially liked working in groups because "it is social. It is always more awkward and tense when it is one on one".

Kev talked about serving on committees though his work at school. His service-learning experience became "we did this" and "we did that". Faye said her "partner really helped her out a lot". She talked about how they "cooperated" with each other. She said she especially liked it when they "balanced".

Reflective Opportunities with Peers

Peer discussion groups can have an important pedagogical function. These discussions allow students to participate in a joint process of thinking through questions stimulated by experiences they have had during their service learning. Sue, an accounting major, said:

> We would have meetings once a week and where we would get together and talk about our experiences, things that were happening. It has opened me up to see things from a whole new perspective, thing that I never really would have thought too much about before, but to see it now from another person's perspective.

Role Models

People who work at service sites provide a resource to the students in that they can be models of moral commitment and offer their perspective on social problems and the dynamics of trying to alleviate the problem. The people who organize service and work toward service learning opportunities for youth help to educate through example. The students talked about their teachers and agency coordinators. Jerry said he felt that he had "matured" after hearing the agency director talk about immature people and the fact that they see the world as their own little circle that revolves around "me". Tanya talked about how the teacher "made them" do the service learning as part of their course grade. She said:

> I have talked to some people who say that it is not their thing and others who feel really inspired by it. I have talked to a lot of students who really feel good about it. I now realize that there are some people like Mr. D who the world goes around because they help push it and that's alright but sometimes you are going to have people who want to make their big money, sit in their big house and watch cable, so it takes all kinds.

This instructor holds celebrations for the students in order to congratulate them for the job they have done.

Diversity

Students practice diversity without thinking about it. It is when they come together and talk about the differences that learning takes place. Beth, whose service learning experience was helping to paint a trailer for a couple in wheelchairs, said:

> I know there is one thing that has made service learning effective in my life and that has been painting the trailer and the tutoring that I have done. I pray for those people and I feel that can change the heart and change the course of your life.

She talked about how Jesus healed but "he told them to go tell others and that is essential that the two go together". "I will never forget the names of the students I tutored because I pray for them every day. They are now in my heart".

Civic Responsibility

Students will either care about societal problems or they will not. Research says caring individuals will want to know more, to be informed, think critically, and be prepared to make a response to the world. Dusty, the student who opened a center for deaf and hearing impaired said,

"When I started school here, my goal was to be the best student I could be and to get the best out of what was being taught". Jerry said:

> I would like to found a homeless shelter, or a nursing home facility. I think the elderly should enjoy those last years and not be stuck in a dark gloomy place. I don't think they should sit out in the halls all day. I would really like to do something here so the elderly could just rest and enjoy their last years and be treated like real people.

One student who said he was passionate about "making a difference" through politics and says that is what it is "all about". Researchers have said that developing citizens should perform community service as a kind of charity. But, according to Radest (1993), government cannot rebuild a family or reclaim a sense of neighborhood, and no bureaucratic program will ever solve the pressing human problems that can be addressed by a vast galaxy of people working voluntarily in their own backyards (p.8). The act of service provides opportunities for students to critically examine the settings in which the service occurs.

Service Learning and Academics

The Impact on Academic Learning Research has been to indicate that in the intellectual domain, a service-learning curriculum can further a number of goals and promote powerful learning environments. Several of our participants talked about their experience-based learning

opportunities. Chris said his 20-hour service learning experience had been connected to a psychology class. He said:

> I think service learning should be a requirement. I really do think kids our age are old enough and mature enough to know these people need to be reached out to, and they need to be helped. I think that us, as college students, all of us going in together working with people in need will help bring the level up with learning and with financial help.

Tanya enrolled in a psychology class. She said she resented the fact that it was required of her to pass the class:

> I was carrying 17 credits, working part time, married, with a family and a business of my own. I was wondering where am I going to get this time; but then once I started working I enjoyed it. You just saw right away the way the director did in trying to help people, talking with them on the phone and fixing emergency supplies.

Dana said her 20 hours was through a psychology class at the community college. It was required and a "lot of people dropped the course because they could not put in the time". Carol talked about her psychology class requirement and said, "My grades did not improve but they just remained the same but I will continue to do service even after this course is over". Margie signed up for psychology and learned of the service requirement. She said that her grades overall have stayed about the same and added "my grade in the course is really poor because he gives a lot of homework –it is nonstop homework".

Kev said his 20 hours were for a psychology class and that he received a grade of A for the class that he would not have gotten if he had not done the service learning. Dusty said his service learning was part of a psychology class but that he had put in 40 hours or more. I decided not to stop because you "get so attached to one person and the kids that I deal with have parents who are split up and they need somebody stable in their lives". Dan said he did not learn of the extra credit for his sociology class until after his professor found out that a group of students would be going to North Carolina on spring break to help flood victims. "I didn't do it for the extra credit but it was

nice to know that my grade did improve because of it—I had to write a paper but it was worth it because it helped me". Tonya, Cathi, Tam, and Lean did their service learning as part of the AmeriCorps Program for scholarship monies. The students met weekly with their service learning coordinator and they had open discussions about their experiences. Faye, Carol, and Sue did their service learning as part of an accounting class. Faye said they "were graded on classroom participation for this. The instructor made sure we had partners and he made sure each group participated in doing someone's taxes to get the experience, so the main part of the grade was participation". Carol said her grades were A's and B's before the service learning and they did not change. Sue said her grades "did not really improve but stayed about the same". James did his service learning for a Rural Sociology class where he learned about the abuse rate in the area. Andrew said his service learning was connected to a sociology class also. "I don't remember how many hours I had to do but about 50 hours, and by doing that it allowed me to work the summer following the class at the Junction Center as an intern". Three of the participants did their service through clubs, one volunteered service to the community, one was through co-op, and 6 were a combination of course, clubs, and voluntary service.

Community/College Impact

Research tells us that commuter students (1) come to campus, go to class, and go home with little time to invest in extracurricular activities and social events that help them build friendships; and (2) close working relationships with other students provides emotional support and strengthens educational gains from the formal curriculum. Teaching in ways that build relationships and a sense of community among students is important for commuter students since their coursework is building the foundation for the college experience. Many of the participants talked about the relationships they had made because of their service learning. Dan said he "had gained a lot of

friends and had learned how to react to people". Zack said "our team came together, we had a blast. Spending time together things worked out". While talking about his service learning, he remembered every detail of his experience in Belize. Beth said she "thinks about people I have talked to while doing dishes". Tonya talked about her experiences at the food bank and with the needy people who had come in, along with a homeless person who had come into her place of work for food. Mike talked about "people who are having a bad time.. harder than you do". Margie said she had a better understanding for kids and could relate to them now. She also talked about the tutor who helped her with her tutoring skills, "because he had worked at camps before" and she needed his help. Betty told me the "guy who was volunteering to do the work helped me" during the experience of painting the trailer. Dusty said "I have found that I am open and that people open up to me". Andrew told me his club goes out into the community and does different things. He said:

> We keep in touch with the organizations and their needs and we try to get students on campus involved that don't know a lot about service. I like to look back on things we have accomplished and things we have done.

Lean said she had "gained wonderful friends and been allowed to be a part of the community". Tonya said she has been able to "get behind the scenes and see from a teacher's perspective". She feels that service learning is "productive for children and their education process". Amber talked about how her service learning had helped her with qualities she can use when "she becomes a teacher" and how wonderful her teacher mentor had been. Faye, Carol and Mel all had to work with a partner in a cooperative way and they said they "liked having a partner to work with" and that they had learned how to handle sensitive information as well as being better able to "talk with older people". James said he plans a career in social welfare and the knowledge and relationships he made through his service learning will be used all through his career. Andrew said he could not

have started his center for the hearing impaired had he not done the service learning because he learned a lot of community agency inform tion.

Service learning for the most part is integrated into the college curriculum in either a psychology or a sociology class. Service learning has also been integrated into an accounting program at one college. The students reported that they "enjoyed" the service learning experience and "were glad they did it".

Some of the students, however, reported that several of their classmates dropped the course because of the service-learning requirement. They felt the add-on to the course was not apparent when schedules were made. Many of the students reported that time, jobs, and family responsibilities were the reasons others college classmates did not get involved. Zack said:

> All of the students here feel it is good obviously but I think what happens on this campus since this is a community college is that people don't see it quite important enough to take priorities over other things in their lives like jobs, family responsibility. A community college is seen as well you don't spend much time here so as a result of that I think that the importance of service is down a lot and people are still searching for what they are going to do with their lives and they don't know yet.

Cathi said it was frustrating for the students because "they don't want to do it but those teachers are going to make me do this and I don't want to. Once they get into it, they really love it though". Amber said "students do alternative spring breaks where they go and do a service experience with communities in need rather than relaxing". Tonya said "people my age are not worried about other people, only about themselves. They are too self-absorbed". Betty said:

> I don't know that I would have tutored and gone if we had not had a community service fair that showed us we could and should get involved. I really felt that God prompted my heart to do that and take that on and it is not something that I want to do. Next semester I will do it, not that I want to, but because I know that it is good for me and it is good for other people.

Dan said he felt there was a lack of awareness on the campus. He said "there are a lot who just don't know about it". Ken said students do things in the community that the

campus doesn't know about. "A lot of times kids will be involved in service just because their friends are". He added:

> A lot of the students do not do service learning because it is a requirement of class and they don't get what it really means to be beneficial to them. A lot of people feel it is such an enormous amount of their time.

Jerry said "people don't know about service learning until they take a class where it is mandatory, they have no idea. Like I had not thought about tutoring until this class".

James said he was "curious to find out what service learning was all about". He said he thought the majority of students had not heard the term. Tonya said that "many of the students at the community college would probably be interested in service learning just because of the moral value and it would help people". Faye said:

> Sadly, I think that a lot of the students I have come in contact with think it is a hassle. It is harder for them because they lack maturity overall in their view of college. I can't imagine them participating in service learning and benefiting from it. I think service learning should be introduced in high school and they would have pride then in their work and it would greatly improve their whole attitude.

Faye, Carol, and Mel all students majoring in accounting, said they were having their first experience with service learning and they do not think a lot of students know about it James said his class were the first service learning class so they were an "experiment" but for people going into a service field, "service learning would be a big help and give them an idea of what goes on".

Getting more students involved in service learning on campus seems to be a challenge for those who are involved. Chris said a seminar on the campus would help to let people get up and tell their story about mean kids, great kids, people who are hateful so they can hear the positive and the negatives of it. Jerry said getting students more involved on campus is a problem they have been facing for some time because there is no central

communication on the campus so for them it is difficult to get the information out. Zack suggested word of mouth. He said, "when I tell my friends about a service-learning project, and tell them to be there, they rally around".

Cathi said it was a good idea to let service learners from the past come and talk with the students in class, how it makes you feel, and it wouldn't be something the teacher would tell them they have to do. Extra credit would work—"it's kind of like bribery but it would work if kids want to graduate". Wendi said having someone come in during student orientation and talk about it, maybe some agency directors, would work. Tonya said if "real families were brought in to tell how their lives were made better, it would be a good thing". Betty said:

> I think the desire would have to come from the student to want to do it in the first place and that does not come natural to most of us. I think I would target one person that I know and tell them all the things you could do and that you would really, really love it and you need to be there.

Mandy talked about their teacher's enthusiasm and his love for service learning that causes the students to always say yes to him.

> You know it is having that love and passion for something that rubs off and, when you feel it deeply, it rubs off on others. I guess we need to ask ourselves what we would want someone to do for us if we were in their shoes. I guess, just remind them of the benefits, what we have, and we never know when we will be in need or what's going to happen tomorrow that will change our lives. They need to realize that.

Ken said more scholarship money should be made available to students who do service learning. Lean said she had a friend go with her to tutoring one day and she goes every day now. All it took was one trip and she wanted to do the experience. Kev said it is just getting students to take that first step and get involved just once and they will be sold on it. He said:

> It is our duty not to ignore what is going on around us and to become aware of the flaws of society. It is sad when people in places like New York City and other large areas have gotten used to the homeless and the poor and walk right by them and treat them like a piece of furniture that will always be there. There is always a thread of hope and you just never know whose lives you can touch and change by lending a helping hand.

John said he didn't think it was hard to get someone to do something but the notion has to be "planted" in their minds. Tam said she would do some "one on one" talking about service learning with the students and "I would stress how it can affect them personally". Tonya said it might be more appealing to the students if you used "make a difference in a child's life, make a difference in your community", and perhaps tell them about the Ambassador Program that offers scholarships to students for doing service learning. Faye says the information needs to be gotten out earlier. She said "extra credit" is always good. Carol said there has to be "something in it" for the students. James said:

> I believe I would have the service-learning part set up like a lab where you have to put extra time into doing that part of it. Just so you know that you have to have extra time, a three-hour class could then become a four-hour class with the service learning added to it.

John said to hold a seminar and "tell the students all about service learning, have some speakers from the agencies come in and share what they do, and offer a question and answer period for the students".

Goals for the Future

The service-learning participation by the community college students represents a struggle to understand their membership within a societal framework. Many of the students have had their goals cemented by the experience, but others have experienced a change in attitude. Some of the students said their goals were not influenced by the service-learning experience.

Chris said that his goals had changed. He now would like to teach middle school students. He said:

> If they don't have the foundation then they will not make it through high school, they will not graduate, and they will just drop out and get a job. Getting a job will be difficult for them because they will have to have that high school diploma to get any type of job. I don't want that to happen to these kids because I think they are smart. At home, they are not given the attention the need and feel they are not smart enough to make it in the world.

Jerry said he originally "wanted to be a horticulture major but now more questions had opened up" for him that he doesn't have the answers to yet. Zack wants to continue to "serve Jesus" because that is why he came to the community college and that has grown through his service.

Cathi definitely wants to complete her bachelor's degree, get a job that will give her insurance. She said she had not decided just where she wanted to settle whether in a school, or rehab center, or other facility. She said her goal to be a "helper" would not change.

Jerry said he would look more closely in his neighborhood for those in need. Tonya wants to eventually become an accountant but said she would continue to be a part of "Faith in Action or whatever agency comes in my path, but I will definitely continue to offer my service to the community". Mike said:

> I don't think my goals have changed any because I plan on pursuing my education and going on into teaching but I believe what has changed in me is that it had made me more sensitive to the problems people face and teachers face in education with situations that may come up.

Margie said her biggest goal in life is to "always have fun". She said:

> I know that I have to make money to live and be responsible, but I like to keep things simple and there is so much out there that will complicate your life and I try to get that across because I say you are only asking for drama. This kid and I talked about what a mess things would be for him and I've seen him more this week. Up until this year, I have always wanted to be a teacher. This year I have kept film in the back of my head, just producing and directing, camera tech, but working with the kids, I mean it really makes it harder to go into film because I just think teaching would be so much fun. I don't know what part of me it is that doesn't want to do it. I haven't really discovered what that is yet, but this has made me more confused because I was pretty confident that I would pursue film. It seems there is some part of me that doesn't want to devote to teaching and I don't know what it is. Last time I was there, I saw this kid. I know this guy and I would look at this kid and say I know

> that is the way he was. I am like, it must really suck to get to know these kids for a year and you have to have your favorites, and bond with these kids. Then they're gone and you have 50 more kids and it's year after year. It would be cool to get to meet all of these cool kids and bond with them all the time. I am the type of person who likes to bond with just a few people and keep them close and, intimacy, between all the things you try to be, would freak me out.

Betty said she wanted to glorify Jesus in her life. She went on:

> I love art, film. I would love to be a cinematographer and I love to write. I have goals to write books and see the world and all that stuff. I have a lot of little goals but only one big one and that is to glorify God. I think my goals have changed according to what my convictions are and growing up in a service-learning lifestyle as far as these particular events have not changed the way I am going to go but they have definitely caused my eyes to be opened more with particular needs of our community, like disabled people, illiterate people, abused people. We always have to be aware of that.

Mandy said she came to the community college with the goal of becoming a registered dietician and that is still her desire. Ken said his goal of Civil Engineering was still the same but he is more service-oriented with scouts and church.

> I have been involved with my wife and school for the past couple of years but I hope to get back into scout work and church service soon. The church is important to my life but I have never been one to go every Sunday.

Wendi said she has been "iffy" about Special Education but now she knows that is what she wants to do and psychology because she can deal with a lot of problems. Dusty said his goals for attending the community college had become stronger. He said:

> I think I have a stronger will now to continue with the goals I had set. I had an idea of what I wanted to do but now it is concrete. I know that I want to go into the Social Welfare field. I would like to found a homeless shelter, nursing home facility, a great one—let me emphasize that, because conditions are not good in most facilities. I think the elderly, because of their age, you assume they don't have many more years to live. Of course, death knows no age, but they should enjoy those last years and not be stuck in a dark gloomy place. I don't think they should sit out in the halls all day, but I would really and, not for the money, like to do something here. I know there would be income, but I would want to have a place where the elderly could just rest, and enjoy their last years. Be treated like real people.

Andrew said he had an "inkling" he wanted to go into politics before but now because of his service learning experience he knows for sure. "I have enjoyed helping people and knowing you make a difference". Tonya said she enrolled originally with a desire to go into computer science, but now wants to be a teacher and eventually go into special education. She said:

> Special education teachers are so wonderful, so kind, so patient, and so very good to the kids. Looking back at my own experiences in school, there were some teachers who were not so great and that is a job that really requires a special person. Hopefully I can be that special person to help the children and be that positive influence in their lives.

James said he thought it was another work-study program and feels it needs "little explaining so that people won't think it is another work-study program". Sue said she had always wanted to be a teacher and now more than ever with her experience in the schools she realized how wonderful it is and how much "I want to be a teacher". Dusty said his goals may have changed but he just wasn't sure. Faye said there are several areas you can go into in the accounting program. Cost accounting and taxation were not high on her list of what she would like to do. Now, "I can include that too. I really enjoy payroll but I really think now that taxation is an option". Carol talked about the accounting program and how really excited she was when she began. She said:

> I got into the cost accounting and other things that I did not enjoy. The tax class was something that I really liked. I would really be interested in doing tax accounting when I do graduate because there are certain parts of accounting that I don't want to go into. I thought taxes would be the same way until I got into it and I thought well, this is easier for me than I thought it would be.

Mel was also in the accounting program. "My goals have totally changed but not because of the tax class. I enjoyed being a teaching assistant and helping students. I worked with college students of all ages and I thoroughly enjoyed that". Dan said he didn't think his goals had changed but that the experience really did make him think about going into teaching. "I really did enjoy it. It made me second guess myself a little bit and it is still an option—maybe a computer teacher".

James said his goals were social welfare and that had not changed. Andrew said he had always been interested in sign language and that is still his goal.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Service learning can and is being done. Many types of projects are carried out by thousands of school and college students that include: Big Buddies, blood drive, paint-a-thons, peer helpers, tax preparation, planting trees, environmental clean up, fundraising for charities, reading for the blind, victim aid, youth agencies, youth leadership, and many, many others. One of the problems with evaluating the effectiveness of service learning is that it has been hard to define the term and what it is meant to accomplish. Many programs emphasize civic responsibility, or social growth, whereas others measure moral and ego development, as well as intellectual, cognitive, and academic effects. Markus, Howard, and King (1993) were the first to provide evidence of positive academic effects of service learning.

According to Dewey (1933), experience is essential for learning and the learning process. Service learning is a form of active, experiential learning that involves working with the community and focuses on citizenship, service and education, all essential components of a democracy.

Service learning can be voluntary, mandatory, through club participation, and church work. Some of the participants in this study were involved through course work mandates. Many of the students talked about psychology, sociology, and accounting classes in which they were required to do 40 hours of service learning. Placements included food banks, crisis centers, school system placements where they worked as tutors and mentors, court appointed special advocate volunteers, victim aid, tax preparation, and youth leadership.

The ultimate goal of service learning is social change. Education is not just about learning to read but learning to question the conditions that left many without access to education, economic opportunity, or political power. This attitude was apparent in the data as students questioned the status quo and many of the students expressed their strong desire to make changes in the community. The service learning experiences provided the opportunity for students to confront situations, raise questions, acquire additional information, and rethink their view of the world and their future role in it. Some of the students talked about how their lives had been changed by the experiences and that they saw social problems in a different way. One student said he felt compelled to go into politics so he could make a difference.

The student placements showed that they had varied tasks and important responsibilities. They said they were challenged by the service-learning experience. Many of them talked about working with people from different backgrounds and how the experience exposed them to different points of view that were unfamiliar to them. From this, students showed reductions in stereotyping, greater appreciation for diversity, increased tolerance, and the sense that these people were just like them. The service learning gave the students an opportunity to interact with people whose experiences were different from their own and to come into contact with situations that challenged their previous assumptions. This will help them critically assess some of their fundamental orientations to society and their role as citizens as well as their involvement in their community.

Some of the students talked about how different the people were from their expectations. The student who painted the trailer for the disabled went into the situation with a different view that later transcended. She said she had been forever changed and that she would no longer see people with handicapping conditions as different. Some of the students talked about walking in the shoes of the people they helped. The student who worked with abused women and children said she

thought about them while doing the dishes and how she so wanted for them to be able to move forward and do things on their own. Or the student who went to Central America and found the children gathered around constantly day after day because they were supposed to be the experts and could help them.

The students found that in attempting to reframe their understanding of issues, the class time and group discussions were very valuable. Another said she really liked worked in groups or teams. She found that the isolation of working alone was unfulfilling and left her feeling unprepared to do her experience effectively.

Many of the students talked about their course requirements. Most of the students said their grades were unaffected by the service learning in that it did not add to their grade, but, if they had not performed the service learning, they would have failed the course. One student said grades weren't hard to come by. Another said his friend had dropped the course because he didn't learn of the service-learning component until after he had signed up for the class and did not want to do the service-learning component. Another student said he did the service learning voluntarily but he felt being told he had to do something would not create the right attitude to perform service learning.

When I asked the students to tell me some of the positives of service learning, I heard things like: "inspirational, loved it, most rewarding experience of my life, my life was drastically changed, changed my outlook on life, loved working with the kids, family situation brought me to tears, agency coordinator gives more than she herself has, improved my self esteem, improved my counseling skills, called to be a leader, liked the energy from working in a group, gave money to a homeless man, wonderful, I felt challenged to be responsible". They liked the service-learning experience even though some of them felt pushed into the situation.

Conclusions

Over 50% of the students in service learning said it gave them a new perspective on social issues and problems within their community.

Some of the students talked about what they would do in the future after realizing their goals of an education and how they would contribute to making the community a better place.

Those students involved in service learning through their accounting class said that they had learned a lot about tax preparation and that it would be a consideration as a career whereas before the service learning they were not interested in tax accounting at all.

Those students who worked in the schools found real responsibilities and said that their work with the children was interesting and challenging. They said they had formed new relationships with the teacher mentors and that the first hand experience gave them a different perspective of teacher responsibilities.

Many of the students were committed to making a difference in the future.

One of the students acquired the necessary knowledge and information to start a center. He said he would not have known how to go about this if he had not participated in the service learning.

Implications for Practice

I asked the students to tell me why more college students did not get involved. Time was the number one reason. They told me that many of their friends have one or more jobs, family responsibilities, children at home that would have required paying for a babysitter, and that their instructors just did not make it sound interesting or else had little enthusiasm for the service learning and said service was something they had to do. One student said if service learning were so important, it should be included in the school catalogue so students could see and know about it.

beforehand. This same student said he thought it would be good to include service learning to the courses with one hour of lab time, and the actual participation hours on the site would reflect the lab time. All of the students felt service learning should be open to more students because there are just "not enough slots" for all of the students who would like to get involved.

According to de Tocqueville, Americans show near equal importance on "being with" others in social relationships (p. 538). This was evidenced through the student perceptions. They talked about the service-learning experiences as though they were the "least they could do", an "honor" to help others in need, a commitment from them to make life better for others, and just plain sincere caring for others. One student said he could not "sleep at night" if he thought he hadn't done something good for someone in need. Several of the students said they felt good about helping others, and that it was "wonderful" and "rewarding" for them. Service learning could be the way commitment, civic responsibility, and citizenship are rebuilt, and thus, initiate teamwork.

According to Masterson (1998), colleges are discovering that learning communities work. They work because of the power of collaboration that has only partly been realized in higher education today because of departmentalization of college life. As research shows, learning communities are good for students because they learn subject material better and from stronger social bonds; good for faculty because they enjoy teaching with their colleagues, and good for the institutions overall. Through it all, learning improves; satisfaction improves; retention improves and all of this leads to student success.

A study done by Astin et al, (2000) showed how service learning affects students. This study found that service learning participation shows significant positive effects on all eleven outcomes measured: academic performance (grade point average, writing skills, critical thinking, values such as commitment to activism and racial understanding, self efficacy, leadership, choice of

a service career, and plans to participate in service after college). Many of this students talked about performing service after they graduate. One said she wanted to have community support groups and focus on nutrition and diet for persons with diabetes, cancer or teens. Another has already started a center for the deaf and hearing impaired. One girl said she had finished her service hours, but she wanted to keep coming because of the attachment she had formed with a student she was tutoring. Another said he wanted to go into politics so he could make a difference. Many of the students talked about service they performed through their church groups, and they wanted to continue to do this. They said because of the service learning, they knew how to relate to kids, understand kids, and appreciate kids more. Others said working with the kids brought back childhood memories and that it was fun. Some said the attachments and bonds they had formed with the kids from low income or single parent homes were truly hard to break. One student said the kids are anxious for me to get there. Another said she observed a child when he actually "got an idea" and he wanted to know more about whatever they were studying. Another talked about children's personal lives being so mixed up to the point a child doesn't know a parent from a live-in girl or boy friend but still may relate to them as a parent. One student said she worked with an 11-year old kid that the teacher said was a problem.. All I saw was a mixed up little boy who wanted to talk about his home situation, not about math or science or social studies.

Calderon (1999) said students do multiculturalism and diversity without realizing it as they work together on service-learning projects, and then bring back to campus all of the enriched ties that were formed. Many college students come out of communities where they were not exposed to people of color or to issues having to do with race, gender, class, or sexual orientation. That is why it is important that students reflect in their journals, make generalizations about their experiences, do the readings, and then participate in group sessions with an instructor to guide their

understanding. Just like the student who helped paint the trailer of the couple in wheelchairs, she said she had no black friends because that's just the way it was, but feels that now she does. She said she felt that her outlook on life had been drastically changed because of this experience. Service learning allows students this opportunity, to broaden their vision, and reach out to people in need.

According to Dugan (2001), annual awards are given to those schools that successfully make community service an integral part of their curriculum. By integrating service learning into their curriculum, these schools are enriching their students, their school environment, and their communities. The schools that were recognized with this award will collaboratively develop a leadership plan designed to help spread the word about the value of service learning and thus encourage other schools to put their own service programs in place (Dugan). One student talked about the need to start service learning in the high schools so students would know the term, have experience in service learning, and be well on the way to more mature thinking. She said a lot of kids come to college, and they don't know why they are there, don't care about their grades, and are too immature and selfish to think about helping others.

Community colleges benefit from service learning in that this experience provides students with that level of involvement that is needed at the community college level to keep students in school and working on their careers, as well as keeping them career focused. The mission of higher education could be to help students to take their places in society as well as help them make their places in society. Students who are involved show a greater retention rate and reaching their goals for a career (Astin, 1993).

The community benefited from the service-learning experience in that the students better understand the value of how their contributions helped to alleviate community needs, and to show

how they are connected to the communities in which they live. The agencies need the student participation to help with the workload that is normally done by an understaffed office.

Recommendations for Further Research and to Improve Practice

Based on the research, the following issues emerged and warrant further discussion and study:

1. A longitudinal study could be implemented to determine long-term effects of service learning on students.
2. The institution's mission and its mission statement speak to what colleges and universities value, and serve as guides to students, staff, and faculty. Therefore, community service and service should be included in the mission statement so as to incorporate a commitment to service, and garner faculty support and enthusiasm.
3. Students learn skills such as leadership, communication, teamwork, work skills, and course-related skills. Reflection must be a part of the service-learning experience for that is where the real growth occurs.
4. The students would like to participate in service learning in a variety of courses.
5. Forced or mandatory service probably does not achieve the kind of results that are desired but rather causes poor attitudes during the experience.
6. Collaboration with the public school systems to initiate the inclusion of service learning in courses in high school so that entering community college freshmen students would already be familiar with the term and what it means.
7. Agency involvement of the requirements or jobs students could be expected to perform—let the students know beforehand.
8. The service-learning agency on campus should be more visible.

9. Advertise service learning more, share experiences, have an Awareness Day for all the students to find out more about service learning; hold seminars and invite agencies in to share information with the students.
10. Develop ways to support and foster students' participation in service learning beyond course requirements, including service learning as part of the orientation for new students.
11. An enthusiastic faculty equals enthusiastic students. Invite faculty to research and publish articles on service learning in the college community.
12. Career awareness becomes more affirmed with a service-learning experience. Many community college students go through identity development and this experience can provide much needed guidance as well as the involvement it takes to persist in getting a college degree or certificate.
13. Service learning could be a way to become a big brother or a big sister to those children who are abused or need someone who cares.
14. Service learning builds patience, understanding, tolerance, and leadership skills.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Alice Hughes

TITLE OF PROJECT: A Study of Service Learning at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College

This Informed Consent will explain about being a research subject in an experiment. It is important that you read this material carefully and then decide if you wish to be a volunteer.

The purposes of this research study are as follows:

1. To add to the available research on service learning as to student perceptions of a service-learning experience;
2. To see how students who have been or are engaged in service-learning activities perceive their educational experiences;
3. To make available to educational institutions the qualitative data acquired from student interviews as it pertains to a service-learning experience.

DURATION

The subject will participate in a nonstandardized interview that will last approximately 60 minutes in length.

PROCEDURES

The researcher will interview one student at a time in the college library for a period of 60 minutes using a student interview guide and beginning with a lead-on question that states, "Tell me what you would like for me to know about service learning." The student interview guide will be used to format questions for the remainder of the interview. Students will be audiotaped. Tapes will be transcribed immediately and will be audited by a college faculty member who has an interest in service learning. Tapes and transcribed materials will be stored at the home of the researcher in Wise, Virginia for a period of ten years, and, at the end of the ten years or at the completion of the dissertation, the audiotapes will be erased and the written data destroyed. Transcribed interviews will be used to furnish the qualitative data for this study.

POSSIBLE RISKS/DISCOMFORTS:

The possible risks and/or discomforts of your involvement include:

1. Inconvenience and use of subject's time;
2. Keeping an appointment for the interview;
3. There is a possibility that some questions may make you uncomfortable.

APPROVED
By The VPISU/VA/RB
7 MAR 2002
BY _____
CHAIR/IRB DESIGNATE

4/26/01 _____ Init.

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PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Alice Hughes

TITLE OF PROJECT: A Study of Service Learning at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College

POSSIBLE BENEFITS and/or COMPENSATION:
The possible benefits of your participation are:

1. There will be NO direct benefit to you for your participation in this research.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS:

If you have any questions, problems or research-related medical problems at any time, you may call Alice Hughes at 540-328-1430 or Penny Dockery at 540-523-2400. You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at 423-439-6134 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every attempt will be made to see that my study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in the home of Alice Hughes at Wise, Virginia for at least 10 years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming me as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health Human Services, the East Tennessee State University/V.A. Institutional Review Board, and the ETSU Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis have access to the study records. My records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above.

COMPENSATION FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT:

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) will pay the cost of emergency first aid for any injury which may happen as a result of your being in this study. They will not pay for any other medical treatment. Claims against ETSU or any of its agents or employees may be submitted to the Tennessee Claims Commission. These claims will be settled to the extent allowable as provided under TCA Section 9-8-307. For more information about claims call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board of ETSU at 423-439-6134.

APPROVED
By The ETSU/VA IRB
07 MAR 2002
BY: Chair/IRB Coordinator

4/26/01 _____ Init.

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PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Alice Hughes

TITLE OF PROJECT: A Study of Service Learning at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

The nature demands, risks, and benefits of the project have been explained to me as well as are known and available. I understand what my participation involves. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to ask questions and withdraw from the project at any time, without penalty. I have read, or have had read to me, and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A signed copy has been given to me.

Your study record will be maintained in strictest confidence according to current legal requirements and will not be revealed unless required by law or as noted above.

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER DATE

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR DATE

APPROVED
By The ETSU/VA IRB
7 MAR 2002
IRB Coordinator

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APPENDIX B: Letter of Introduction

P. O. Box 1556
Wise, Virginia 24293

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Alice Hughes and I am currently a doctoral student at East Tennessee State University. I am in the process of completing research for my dissertation. My dissertation is "A Study of Service Learning at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College. I am requesting permission to conduct interviews of students involved in service learning activities at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College.

I will be contacting you soon to gain your consent and answer any questions you may have concerning this study, participants, or interview process. Primarily, I am interested in learning about how students who have been or are engaged in service-learning activities perceive their educational experiences.

I am enclosing a copy of the interview guide that I will be using to conduct the interviews. If you have any concerns about the content of the interviews, I will be happy to explain or answer any questions when I contact you by phone.

I will also be obtaining signed consent forms from the students selected to participate in the study. I would like to discuss an appropriate time to interview the students and schedule a date to conduct the interviews.

I am looking forward to getting started on my research and would appreciate your consent to conduct this research at Virginia Highlands Community College and Mountain Empire Community College. If for any reason you need to contact me prior to my phone contact with you, I can be reached at (540) 565-1115. Thank you for you time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Alice M. Hughes

APPENDIX C: Demographic Data Sheet

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET

1. Name_____
2. Gender_____
3. Race: White_____ African American_____

   Native American _____Hispanic _____Other_____
4. Full Time Student_____ Part Time Student_____
5. Married_____ Divorced _____Single_____
6. Employed_____ Full Time_____ Part Time_____

   Not Employed_____
7. Dependents_____
8. First Year Student_____
9. Second Year Student_____
10. Years involved with Service Learning_____
11. Do you plan to sign up for service learning again? Yes_____ No_____

APPENDIX D: Student Interview Guide

STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Tell me anything you would like for me to know about 'service learning'.
2. What did you learn from this experience? How did it help you personally?
3. Why do you think other students at this college believe or know about service learning?
4. What from your point of view do you believe is the reason(s) other students do not get more involved with service learning?
5. Can you tell me five positive things about your experience with service learning?
6. Has your service-learning experience been connected to a course, voluntary, or what?
7. What about service learning could or should be changed on this campus?
8. Why do you think that?
9. If you were responsible for getting students more involved in service-learning activities, how could you most effectively get their participation? What key points would you stress to them?
10. Is there anything else others should know about service learning in order to participate in it?
11. Have your goals in life changed due to this experience?
12. Is there anything else you would like to say or want me to know about service learning before the session ends?

APPENDIX E: Auditor's Report

Mountain Empire Community College
P. O. Drawer 700 • Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219 • 540-523-2400 V/TDD

July 27, 2001

Mrs. Alice Hughes, Doctoral Candidate
East Tennessee State University
Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
501 Warf-Pickel Hall
Johnson City, TN 37614

RE: Dissertation Audit Report

Mrs. Hughes:

I am pleased to submit to you this auditor's report for inclusion in your doctoral dissertation. Procedures for auditing naturalistic studies, found in Appendix B of Guba and Lincoln's Naturalistic Inquiry (1995) were used to conduct this audit. The findings of this audit process are:

1. Data was found to be both complete and comprehensive. The data was well organized, thus reducing confusion. The data provided for audit was appropriate and linkages obvious. I, therefore, confirm the audibility of the data.

2. Using procedural information from our audit discussions and a review of your field and debriefing notes revealed no evidence of researcher bias. Findings selected at random were traced to the raw data, interview notes, and audit discussions, showing indications of careful attention to the possibility of alternative findings. Your findings are based on the data and are now confirmed.

3. An examination of sampling procedures, the establishment and any necessary modification of working hypotheses, and the flow of methodological decisions were easily identifiable, purposeful, and relevant to a naturalistic study. The process on inquiry used by the researcher is seen as both appropriate and thorough, thus establishing the dependability of the study.

4. The use of organized document notes and entries, student debriefing, and integration of audit plans into the research design lead me to confirm the credibility of this study.

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My observations and audit activities lead me to conclude that you have maintained the highest professional standards, research ethics and practices of research. This addition to the literature on service learning will contribute much.

Sincerely,

Penny A. Dockery, B.S., M.A., LPC

Penny A. Dockery, B.S., M.A., LPC
Director, AmeriCorps Program

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VITA

ALICE HUGHES

Personal Data:	Place of Birth: Wise, Virginia Parents: Emerson and Ada Freeman
	Marital Status: Married, husband—Michael, daughter—Maria, stepson—Jason and wife Gail, grandson—Lucas
Education:	Public Schools, Wise, Virginia
	Clinch Valley College, Wise, Virginia Elementary Ed., B.S., 1977
	University of Virginia Elementary Ed., M.A., 1984
	University of Virginia Administration and Supervision, Endorsement, 1989
	East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee Doctor of Education 2002
Professional Experience:	Teacher, Wise Primary School; Wise, Virginia; 1978-1997
	Assistant Principal, Appalachia Elementary School, Appalachia, Virginia, 1997 - Present

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